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ABSTRACT

The Texas Education Agency prepares an annual report on dropouts in Texas public schools. This report contains information on the annual dropout rate used in the accountability system and state attrition rates. It also includes a series of longitudinal secondary school completion/student status rates. Of the 1,818,940 students who attended grades 7 through 12 in Texas public schools during the 2000-2001 school year, 17,563 students, or 1.0%, were reported to have dropped out. This was a decrease of 25.1% in the number of dropouts and the second consecutive large decline in the dropout rate. After remaining stable for 3 years at 1.6%, the rate decreased by 0.3 percentage points in 1999-2000 and again in 2000-2001. Dropout rates for African American and Hispanic students remained above that for white students statewide. The statewide annual dropout rate for grades 9 through 12 was 1.4%. The longitudinal secondary school series tracks a class of students over 5 to 7 years, from the time they enter grade 9 or grade 7 until the fall following their anticipated graduation. Of 249,161 students in the class of 2001 grade 9 cohort, 81.1% graduated, 4.8% received a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, and 7.9% continued school the following year. The 4-year longitudinal dropout rate for this class was 6.2%. The report also provides historical information about dropout policy and the evolution of the dropout definition used for accountability purposes. Ten appendices contain supplemental information about Texas dropout statistics. (Contains 34 tables and 18 figures.) (SLD)

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TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

AUSTIN, TEXAS

Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2000-01

DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTING AND RESEARCH

DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

AUGUST 2002

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Abstract. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) prepares an annual report on dropouts in Texas public schools. This report includes state summaries of the annual dropout rate used in the accountability system, along with state attrition rates. It also includes a series of longitudinal secondary school completion/student status rates.

Out of 1,818,940 students who attended Grades 7-12 in Texas public schools during the 2000-01 school year, 17,563 students, or 1.0 percent, were reported to have dropped out. This was a decrease of 25.1 percent in the number of dropouts, and the second consecutive large decline in the dropout rate. After remaining stable for three years at 1.6 percent, the rate decreased by 0.3 percentage points in 1999-00 and again in 2000-01. Dropout rates for African American and Hispanic students remained above that for White students statewide. The statewide annual dropout rate for Grades 9-12 was 1.4 percent.

The longitudinal secondary school series tracks a class of students over five to seven years, from the time they enter Grade 9 or Grade 7 until the fall following their anticipated graduation. Out of 249,161 students in the class of 2001 Grade 9 cohort, 81.1 percent graduated, 4.8 percent received a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, and 7.9 percent continued school the following school year. The four-year longitudinal dropout rate for this class was 6.2 percent.

In addition to statewide statistics, the report provides historical information about dropout policy in Texas and the evolution of the dropout definition used for accountability purposes. Common methods of measuring student progress through school are discussed, along with advantages and disadvantages associated with each measure. Extensive background information on TEA data collection, processing, and reporting is presented, and national requirements for dropout data are described. Finally, the report summarizes reasons students were reported to have dropped out of school and outlines the state plan to reduce the dropout rate.

Keywords. *Secondary education, high school completion, dropouts, annual dropout rate, longitudinal dropout rate, completion rate, graduation rate, attrition rate, Grades 7-12, Grades 9-12.*

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Highlights

Annual Dropout Rates

- In 2000-01, the number of dropouts in Grades 7-12 from Texas public schools decreased by 25.1 percent, to 17,563, down from 23,457 in 1999-00. This was the second year that dropout standards for accountability ratings became more stringent, and the decline in the number of dropouts was the largest since the 1994-95 school year.
- Out of 1,818,940 students who attended Grades 7-12 in Texas public schools during the 2000-01 school year, 1.0 percent were reported to have dropped out. In the previous year, the statewide annual dropout rate was 1.3 percent.
- The gaps between dropout rates of African American and Hispanic students and that of White students narrowed. The dropout rate for African American students decreased from 1.8 percent to 1.3 percent between 1999-00 and 2000-01, and the dropout rate for Hispanic students decreased from 1.9 percent to 1.4 percent. The rate for White students decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 0.5 percent.
- Although the gaps narrowed, dropout rates for African American (1.3%) and Hispanic students (1.4%) were more than twice that of White students (0.5%).
- Grade 9 had the largest number of dropouts (4,957), but this grade also showed the largest percentage point decrease in the dropout rate, from 2.0 percent in 1999-00 to 1.3 percent in 2000-01.
- The statewide annual dropout rate for Grades 9-12 was 1.4 percent. Using a grade span of 7-12, rather than 9-12, increased the number of dropouts by 1,560 and decreased the dropout rate by four tenths of a percentage point.
- Reasons commonly cited for dropping out of school included poor attendance, pursuit of a job, and age.

Longitudinal Rates

- Out of 249,161 students in the 1997-98 Grade 9 cohort, 85.9 percent either graduated or received General Educational Development (GED) certificates by 2001. An additional 7.9 percent continued in school the following school year.
- The longitudinal dropout rate of 6.2 percent was a decrease from the 7.2 percent longitudinal dropout rate for the class of 2000 Grade 9 cohort, and the 8.5 percent longitudinal dropout rate for the class of 1999 Grade 9 cohort.
- The overall graduation rate was 81.1 percent. African American students had a graduation rate of 77.7 percent; White students, 86.8 percent; and Hispanic students, 73.5 percent. Each group showed an increase over the preceding year in the percentage of students graduating.

- Hispanic students and economically disadvantaged students had the highest longitudinal dropout rates, with Hispanic students at 9.6 percent and economically disadvantaged students at 9.9 percent. But economically disadvantaged students also had the largest percentage point decrease, down 1.7 percentage points from 11.6 percent the year before. The dropout rate for African American students decreased 1.5 percentage points, from 9.9 percent to 8.4 percent.
- Females had a higher graduation rate than males and lower rates of GED certification, continuation, and dropping out.
- The Grade 7 cohorts for the classes of 2000 and 2001 demonstrated patterns similar to those for the Grade 9 cohorts. The graduation and continuation rates increased, and the rate of GED certification stayed the same. The dropout rate for the class of 2001 Grade 7 cohort decreased from 7.7 percent to 6.8 percent.
- For 2001, the attrition rates for Grades 9-12 and Grades 7-12 were 36.7 percent and 24.6 percent, respectively.

Leaver Reporting

- Statewide, districts accounted for 99.2 percent (or 1,913,058) of the students who were enrolled or in attendance in Grades 7-12 in 2000-01.
- Only 15,752 (or 0.8%) of the students in Grades 7-12 in 2000-01 were underreported.
- 2000-01 was the fourth year the leaver record was used, and reporting continued to improve. In 2000-01, there were only 15,752 underreported student records, compared to 19,718 underreported student records in 1999-00.
- On a percentage basis, students enrolled or in attendance in Grades 7-12 who had not been accounted for dropped to 0.8 percent from 1.0 percent in 1999-00.
- In 2000-01, no district had more than 1,000 underreported student records, and 40 had more than 10 percent underreported student records. In 1999-00, one district had more than 1,000 underreported student records, and 53 districts failed to account for more than 10 percent of students enrolled.
- The number of districts that accounted for all students continued to increase, from 443 in 1999-00 to 567 in 2000-01.

Introduction

Over the past several decades, major changes in economic and social circumstances have heightened public concern about educational excellence and equity. Rapid advances in technology and the emergence of a global marketplace have steadily diminished the labor market opportunities available to young people with little education or training. At the same time, youths traditionally considered most at risk of academic failure have comprised increasingly larger proportions of the Texas school-age population.

In response to these challenges, Texas has moved from a public education system that focuses on rules and procedures to one that emphasizes student achievement and accountability for results. School districts and campuses are now held responsible for enabling all students to achieve exemplary levels of performance. Lawmakers have facilitated school improvement by reducing state regulation and giving educators the flexibility to tailor programs to meet local needs.

Sophisticated data systems allow the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to monitor school performance using a wide range of measures. Common indicators of academic excellence include attendance, advanced course completion, and standardized test results. Individually, each indicator concentrates on a unique aspect of performance; together, they present a broader picture of educational quality and effectiveness.

A fundamental measure of school success is whether students are completing their secondary education. Over time, refinements in data collection and processing have allowed TEA to provide increasingly more detailed information about high school completion. Student progress through high school can now be measured using a variety of methods and rates. Each type of rate is valid and useful for its specific purpose and can offer a reliable assessment of the educational experience it was designed to measure.

This report, published annually since 1989, takes advantage of these expanded resources by presenting comprehensive findings about both high school completion and non-completion. The report includes state summaries of the annual Grade 7-12 dropout rate used in the accountability system and longitudinal high school completion/student status rates. The longitudinal series includes four-year rates for graduates, recipients of General Educational Development (GED) certificates, and students who continue in school following their anticipated graduation dates. Four-year dropout rates make up the fourth component of the series. Together, the rates add to 100 percent. Also presented are Grade 9-12 annual dropout rates, Grade 7-12 longitudinal rates, and Grade 9-12 and Grade 7-12 attrition rates.

The Texas Education Agency continues to take steps to improve the accuracy of dropout reporting. In 1997-98, the separate dropout and graduate data records submitted by school districts were eliminated and replaced with a leaver data record. Districts are now required to account for all students enrolled in Grades 7-12, not just dropouts and graduates. This more complete set of student

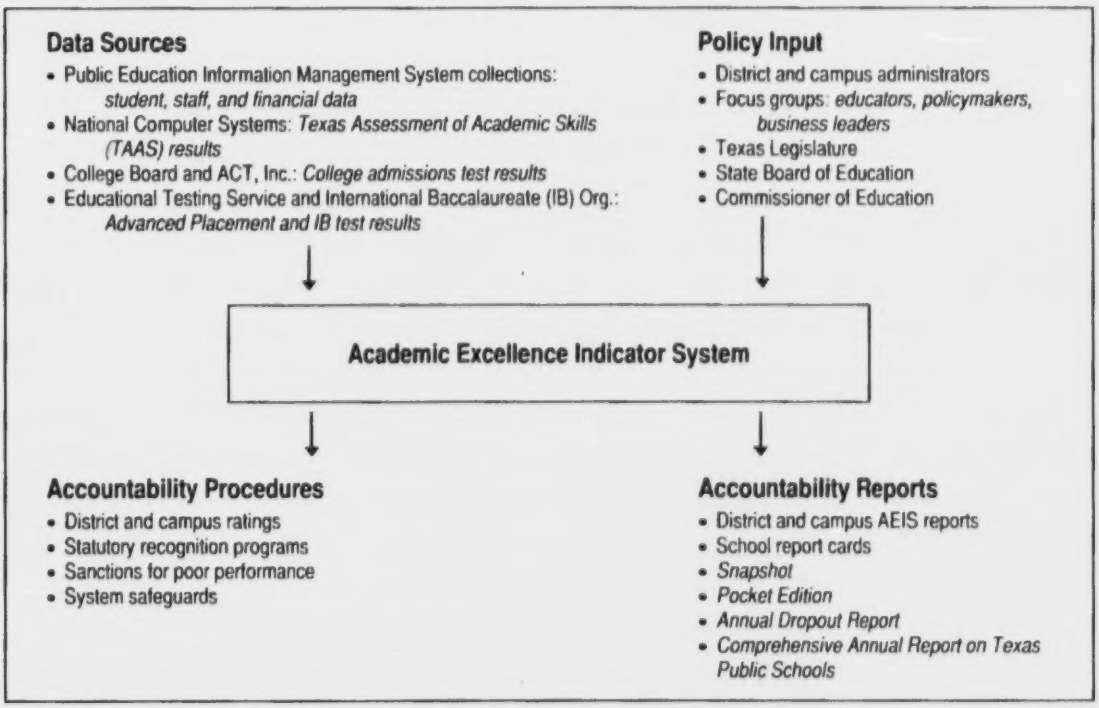
withdrawal information can be better monitored at the state level. Results of TEA analyses of leaver data quality are presented in this report.

In addition to statewide statistics, the report provides historical information about dropout policy in Texas and the evolution of the dropout definition used for accountability purposes. Common methods of measuring student progress through school are discussed, along with potential advantages and disadvantages associated with each measure. Extensive background on TEA data collection, processing, and reporting is presented, and national requirements for dropout data are described. Finally, the report summarizes reported reasons students drop out of school and outlines the state plan to reduce the dropout rate.

State Accountability System

The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) serves as the basis of an integrated accountability system that includes a mechanism for rating campuses and school districts, as well as for reporting performance results to districts, schools, and parents. As Figure 1 illustrates, data collected from school districts through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) or provided by test contractors are compiled for each school year. These AEIS data are the primary sources for accountability evaluations and reports.

Figure 1
Overview of Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)


Data Sources
• Public Education Information Management System collections: student, staff, and financial data
• National Computer Systems: Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) results
• College Board and ACT, Inc.: College admissions test results
• Educational Testing Service and International Baccalaureate (IB) Org.: Advanced Placement and IB test results
Policy Input
• District and campus administrators
• Focus groups: educators, policymakers, business leaders
• Texas Legislature
• State Board of Education
• Commissioner of Education
Academic Excellence Indicator System
Accountability Procedures
• District and campus ratings
• Statutory recognition programs
• Sanctions for poor performance
• System safeguards
Accountability Reports
• District and campus AEIS reports
• School report cards
• Snapshot
• Pocket Edition
• Annual Dropout Report
• Comprehensive Annual Report on Texas Public Schools

Published beginning with the 1990-91 school year, AEIS reports include performance indicators designed to measure the educational progress of campuses and districts. Since 1994, the accountability system has distinguished between three types of performance indicators: base, additional, and report-only. (For a detailed description of components of the AEIS, see the Texas Education Agency (TEA) *Accountability Manual* [cf. TEA, 2002d].) From 1994 to 2000, the base indicators were defined as the attendance rate for Grades 1-12, the annual dropout rate for Grades 7-12, and performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Starting with the 2001 ratings cycle, the attendance rate was made an additional indicator, reducing the number of base indicators to two. Thus, annual dropout rates and TAAS performance are used to determine district

Table 1
Dropout Rate Standards in the Texas Public Education Accountability System, 1994-2002

	1994	1995-2000	2001	2002
Dropout rate standards, Grades 7-12 (for all students and each student group)				
Exemplary	≤1.0%	≤1.0%	≤1.0%	≤1.0%
Recognized	≤3.5%	≤3.5%	≤3.0%	≤2.5%
Academically Acceptable[a] / *Acceptable*	n/a[b]	≤6.0%	≤5.5%	≤5.0%
Academically Unacceptable[a] / *Low-performing*	n/a	>6.0%[c]	>5.5%	>5.0%

Note. Student groups are: African American, Hispanic, White, and economically disadvantaged.

[a]For 1994 through 1996, the district ratings used were: *Exemplary, Recognized, Accredited,* and *Accredited Warned.* A statutory change in 1997 resulted in the current rating labels. [b]Not available. [c]Special conditions for a single dropout rate exceeding the *Acceptable* standard apply.

and campus ratings. These indicators are evaluated for individual student groups (African American, Hispanic, White, and economically disadvantaged), as well as for all students. There are four standard ratings for districts and campuses: *Exemplary, Recognized, Academically Acceptable/Acceptable,* and *Academically Unacceptable/Low-performing.* Other labels can be applied in special circumstances outside the standard rating procedures.

Additional indicators (such as college admissions testing results, participation in the State Board of Education's recommended high school program, and attendance rates) are measured against standards but do not affect accountability ratings. Instead, districts and campuses may receive acknowledgment through the Gold Performance Acknowledgment system for high levels of performance on these indicators. Report-only indicators (such as progress of prior-year TAAS failers and completion rates) are included in AEIS reports, but state standards for these indicators are not set. The AEIS reports also include school district profile data, such as student and teacher demographic information, that provide a context for interpreting the performance data.

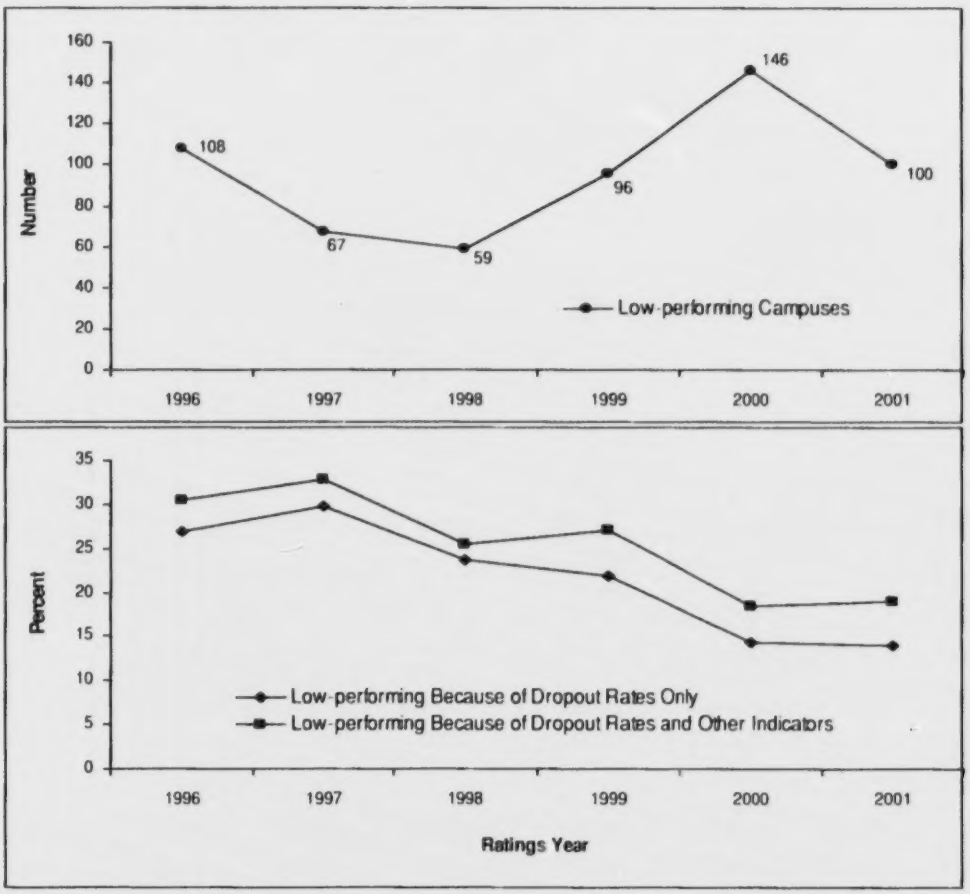
Typically, when a new base or additional indicator is added to the AEIS, it is phased in over three years. In the first year, data are collected and reported to establish benchmarks, which are then used to set standards for the future. For the next two years, the data are reported to school districts and campuses to provide opportunities for familiarization with the indicator, for data collection refinements that may need to occur, and for advance local planning. In the fourth year, the indicator is used for ratings or acknowledgment.

Standards for performance on the base indicators are also phased in over time. Table 1 shows past and future changes to the dropout rate standards in the accountability system. In 1994, annual Grade 7-12 dropout rates for the 1992-93 school year were used for *Exemplary* and *Recognized* ratings only. A dropout rate of 1 percent or less was required for a rating of *Exemplary,* and a rate of 3.5 percent or less was required for a rating of *Recognized.* In 1995, TEA began using annual dropout rates for all ratings categories. A dropout rate standard of 6.0 percent or less was established for a district rating of *Accredited* (now called *Academically Acceptable*) or a campus rating of *Acceptable.* In 2001, the maximum dropout rates allowed for ratings of *Recognized* or *Academically Acceptable/Acceptable* were decreased to 3.0 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively. Each decreased by another 0.5 percentage

points in 2002. In 2003, longitudinal secondary school completion/student status rates will be incorporated in the accountability system.

Since a dropout indicator was incorporated in the accountability system in 1994, the percentage of *Low-performing* campuses rated *Low-performing* because of dropout rates has generally declined (see Figure 2). Of the 100 campuses statewide rated *Low-performing* in 2001, 19 campuses (19.0%) had a dropout rate greater than 6.0 percent. The number decreased to 19 campuses from 27 the preceding year.

Figure 2
Number of *Low-performing* Campuses and Percentage Rated *Low-performing* Because of Dropout Rates, Texas Public Schools, 1996-2001



	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Dropout Rates Only (%)	26.9	29.9	23.7	21.9	14.4	14.0
Dropout Rates and Other Indicators (%)[a]	30.6	32.8	25.4	27.1	18.5	19.0

[a]Includes campuses rated *Low-performing* because of dropout rates only.

Monitoring Student Progress

History of Data Collection

In 1984, when education reform in Texas began to focus on accountability for student performance, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) collected a wide variety of school district information using some 200 separate paper forms. These aggregated data provided educators, policymakers, and the public with a broad sense of the direction of public education in the state. Nevertheless, because data collection and reporting procedures were not standardized, there were inconsistencies across districts in definitions, calculations, and reports. This limited the usefulness of the student data for detailed evaluation of campus and district performance trends.

When the Texas Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 72 in the summer of 1984, it became necessary to develop a comprehensive, coordinated database of public education information. The system had to allow student performance and progress to be measured accurately, evaluated fairly, and reported publicly in a timely manner. After two years of development, the State Board of Education (SBOE) in 1986 approved implementation of the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

The first PEIMS data collection took place in the fall of 1987. Districts were responsible for reporting organizational, financial, and staff information. The following year, dropout records became the first individual student data records submitted through PEIMS. A Person Identification Database (PID) system was implemented shortly thereafter, enabling records for an individual to be linked across collections by matching identification information. With student-level data and a system for linking student records, TEA could produce automated aggregations of campus-, district-, and state-level information. Currently, there are four data collections per school year, each with submission and resubmission deadlines.

In 1990-91, districts began submitting student-level enrollment and graduation records. This information, combined with the dropout record, enabled TEA to look at different statuses attained by students on an annual basis. It also became possible for the first time to consider tracking student progress across multiple years. As PEIMS continued to evolve, refinements in data collection, processing, and reporting helped meet the growing demand for reliable information about public education. The desire for a more comprehensive and accurate accounting of reported student outcomes led to a major change in data submission requirements for 1997-98. Starting in 1997-98, districts were required to provide information on all students who left the district, not just students who dropped out or graduated.

Leaver Reporting System

Reporting Requirements

Before the 1997-98 school year, districts were required to report only students in Grades 7-12 who graduated or dropped out. The statuses of students who left school for other reasons were not reported through PEIMS. Since the 1997-98 school year, school districts have had to report the statuses of all students who were enrolled or in attendance in Grades 7-12. The following fall, returning students are reported on enrollment records; students who left during the year or did not return are reported on "leaver records." Using the leaver record, districts now report up to 3 of 43 leaver reason codes to describe the circumstances of a student's departure.

Based on the leaver reason codes, school leavers are categorized as graduates, dropouts, or other leavers. Other leavers include students who withdraw: to enroll in other public or private schools in the state; to enroll in schools outside the state; to enroll in colleges or General Educational Development (GED) preparation programs; or to enter home schooling. See Appendix A for the number of students reported under each leaver reason code for the 1997-98 through 2000-01 school years.

Procedures for Assessing Reporting

To determine whether districts have accounted for all students enrolled or in attendance in Grades 7-12, TEA compares the fall enrollment and leaver records with the enrollment and attendance records submitted the previous year. Students are matched across years on student identification number (social security number or state identification number), last name, first name, and date of birth. Student identification number must match, plus any two of the other three criteria. Based on these comparisons, student records are divided into three groups:

1. students for whom enrollment or leaver records are expected and are received;
2. "underreported" students for whom enrollment or leaver records are expected but are not received; or
3. "overreported" students for whom leaver records are received when none are expected.

Since 1997-98, TEA has compared the overreported and underreported leaver records within individual school districts and has removed students from the two lists when there is a high degree of matching between the two sets of records. As a result, many underreported and overreported student records attributable solely to student identification errors have been eliminated. It is still possible that some student records could not be matched due to discrepancies in student identification information. Districts should note that this is the last year the agency will do these additional comparisons. Beginning with the 2001-02 underreported students, TEA will no longer perform the additional processing to remove partial matches between underreported and overreported student records.

Leaver records are also subject to an automated statewide process to exclude some reported dropouts from dropout rate computations as appropriate for accountability purposes. For example, if a

Overview of Leaver Data Processing

Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data, including leaver records, are submitted by school districts to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The regional education service centers (ESCs) are responsible for ensuring compliance with basic reporting requirements and schedules. Data checks are performed at TEA as part of initial data processing. Each district receives a list of potential underreported students – those Grade 7-12 students served the previous year for whom the district has not submitted either enrollment records (for returning students) or leaver records (for graduates, dropouts, and other leavers). Districts have the opportunity to correct and resubmit their data before the resubmission deadline. The due date for the fall data submission that includes the leaver data is early December. The resubmission deadline is mid-January.

After TEA receives the final PEIMS data submission, an automated statewide search of other data files is conducted. The search identifies students reported to have dropped out or withdrawn who did not do so. This includes students who are found enrolled in public school somewhere else in the state, students appearing on the General Educational Development (GED) information file as having received GED certificates, students reported as having graduated, and any students who have been identified as dropouts in previous school years.

Once this process is completed, TEA calculates the annual dropout rate for each campus and district with Grade 7-12 enrollment, for all students and for each student group (African American, Hispanic, White, and economically disadvantaged). These rates, together with Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) scores, serve as academic excellence indicators and are used to determine for each district and campus an accountability rating of either *Exemplary*, *Recognized*, *Academically Acceptable/Acceptable*, or *Academically Unacceptable/Low-performing*. The agency also calculates longitudinal completion/student status rates to meet legislative reporting requirements and public information needs.

Following release of the ratings each year, the commissioner of education convenes an accountability advisory group of educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders to review issues that arose during the rating cycle and changes proposed for the following year. As necessary, focus groups of educators are appointed to study issues and bring recommendations to the advisory group. Changes to the dropout definition and calculation of the annual dropout rate, as well as leaver data quality issues that have emerged since the inception of the accountability system, have been reviewed by the accountability advisory group. The accountability dropout definition and use of a completion rate in the accountability rating system were among the topics addressed by a focus group convened in early 2002.

reported dropout is discovered to have remained enrolled in a public school somewhere in the state, received a GED certificate, or graduated from a Texas public school, the record is excluded from the official dropout count. Records for other leavers are also subject to this process.

TEA then determines, on a district-by-district basis, counts of returning students, overreported and underreported student records, graduates, dropouts, and other leavers. Underreported student records as percentages of reported students are also calculated.

Accountability Safeguards

Leaver data represent a more complete set of student withdrawal information that can be better monitored at the state level. Prior to the 1997-98 school year, districts were required to report only students who graduated or dropped out. Leaver data includes withdrawal information on those who graduated or dropped out, as well as those who left school for other reasons. Data used to rate districts and campuses undergo routine screening before and after release of the accountability ratings to validate data integrity.

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For 1997-98, data inquiries initiated by the agency focused on underreported students. For 1998-99, a comprehensive desk audit of leaver reporting was implemented as part of the standard accountability system safeguards. A combination of broad analyses of leaver data quality and analyses of specific leaver reason codes is currently used to identify districts with underreported students and leavers likely reported with incorrect leaver reason codes. For example, TEA can search enrollment records to determine if students reported as leaving with the intent to enroll in other Texas public school districts actually enrolled elsewhere. In addition, leaver reporting patterns in a district can be compared from year to year, as well as to reporting patterns of other districts in the region. TEA has the ability to identify school districts that show, for example, dramatic increases in students moving out of state or that report many more students moving out of state than reported by neighboring districts. In addition, beginning with the 2001-02 school year dropout data, districts will be required to submit to TEA independent audit reports of their dropout data (Texas Education Code [TEC] §39.055, 2001).

School districts with serious and systematic data reporting problems are subject to investigation. Districts investigated for data quality are automatically subject to examination the following year to determine whether or not problems persist. A district with data problems is first contacted by telephone and letter. If questions remain, an investigation team visits the district to examine documentation. In the 2001 ratings cycle, site visits to audit leaver records were conducted in 21 regular school districts and 26 open-enrollment charter schools. In addition, site visits were made to 16 randomly selected districts to audit leaver records. Follow-up desk reviews of leaver data were carried out for 62 districts that had received site visits the year before.

Policymakers are currently focusing on the number of underreported students as a measure of the accuracy of leaver reporting. School districts can produce lists of potential underreported students in their initial fall data submissions. Districts then have the opportunity to correct errors and omissions before the resubmission deadline. The corrections remove many students who had been on the preliminary lists of underreported student records. Following resubmission, additional processing is done to finalize the list of underreported students.

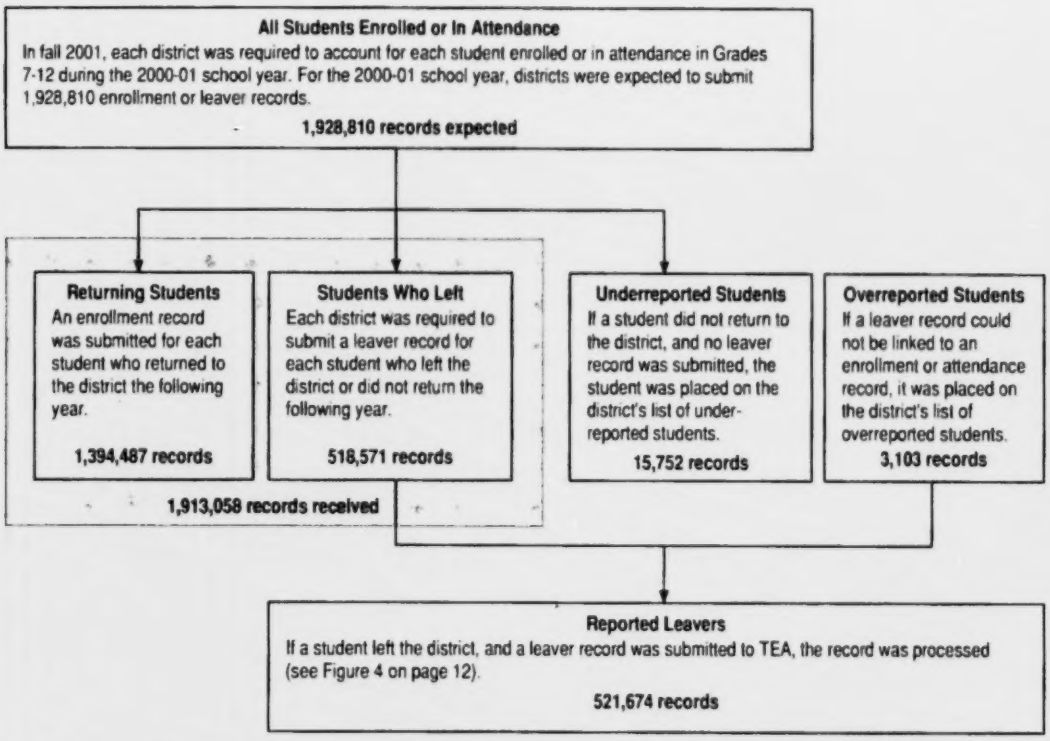
Results of PEIMS Leaver Collections

Underreported Students

Statewide, districts accounted for 99.2 percent (or 1,913,058) of the students who were enrolled or in attendance in Grades 7-12 in 2000-01 (see Figure 3). Only 0.8 percent (or 15,752) of the students in Grades 7-12 in 2000-01 were underreported.

2000-01 was the fourth year the leaver record was used, and reporting improved over 1999-00. In 2000-01, there were only 15,752 underreported student records, compared to 19,718 underreported student records in 1999-00. This is a substantial decrease from the 67,281 underreported student records identified in 1997-98 (see Table 2). On a percentage basis, students enrolled or in attendance in Grades 7-12 who had not been accounted for dropped to 0.8 percent from 1.0 percent in 1999-00.

Figure 3
Initial Processing of Year-to-Year Reporting of Students in Grades 7-12, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01


All Students Enrolled or In Attendance
In fall 2001, each district was required to account for each student enrolled or in attendance in Grades 7-12 during the 2000-01 school year. For the 2000-01 school year, districts were expected to submit 1,928,810 enrollment or leaver records.
1,928,810 records expected
Returning Students
An enrollment record was submitted for each student who returned to the district the following year.
1,394,487 records
Students Who Left
Each district was required to submit a leaver record for each student who left the district or did not return the following year.
518,571 records
1,913,058 records received
Underreported Students
If a student did not return to the district, and no leaver record was submitted, the student was placed on the district's list of under-reported students.
15,752 records
Overreported Students
If a leaver record could not be linked to an enrollment or attendance record, it was placed on the district's list of overreported students.
3,103 records
Reported Leavers
If a student left the district, and a leaver record was submitted to TEA, the record was processed (see Figure 4 on page 12).
521,674 records

TEA screens district data to ensure that districts have accounted for all students who attended Grades 7-12. There must be one record per student per district attended. A student who attends more than one district during the school year is included in the count for each district attended.

Much of the improvement in leaver reporting in 2000-01 appears to have resulted from more accurate student identification and better reporting of students transferring to other Texas public school districts.

Table 2
Year-to-Year Reporting of Students in Grades 7-12, Texas Public Schools, 1997-98 Through 2000-01

Group	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Returning students	1,325,546	1,345,536	1,364,125	1,394,487
Graduates	197,186	203,393	212,925	215,316
Official other leavers	114,421	118,488	116,644	112,986
Reconciled other leaver records	122,980	149,096	157,818	170,209
Official dropouts	27,550	27,592	23,457	17,563
Reconciled dropout records	10,312	9,189	7,566	5,600
Underreported students	67,281	21,432	19,718	15,752

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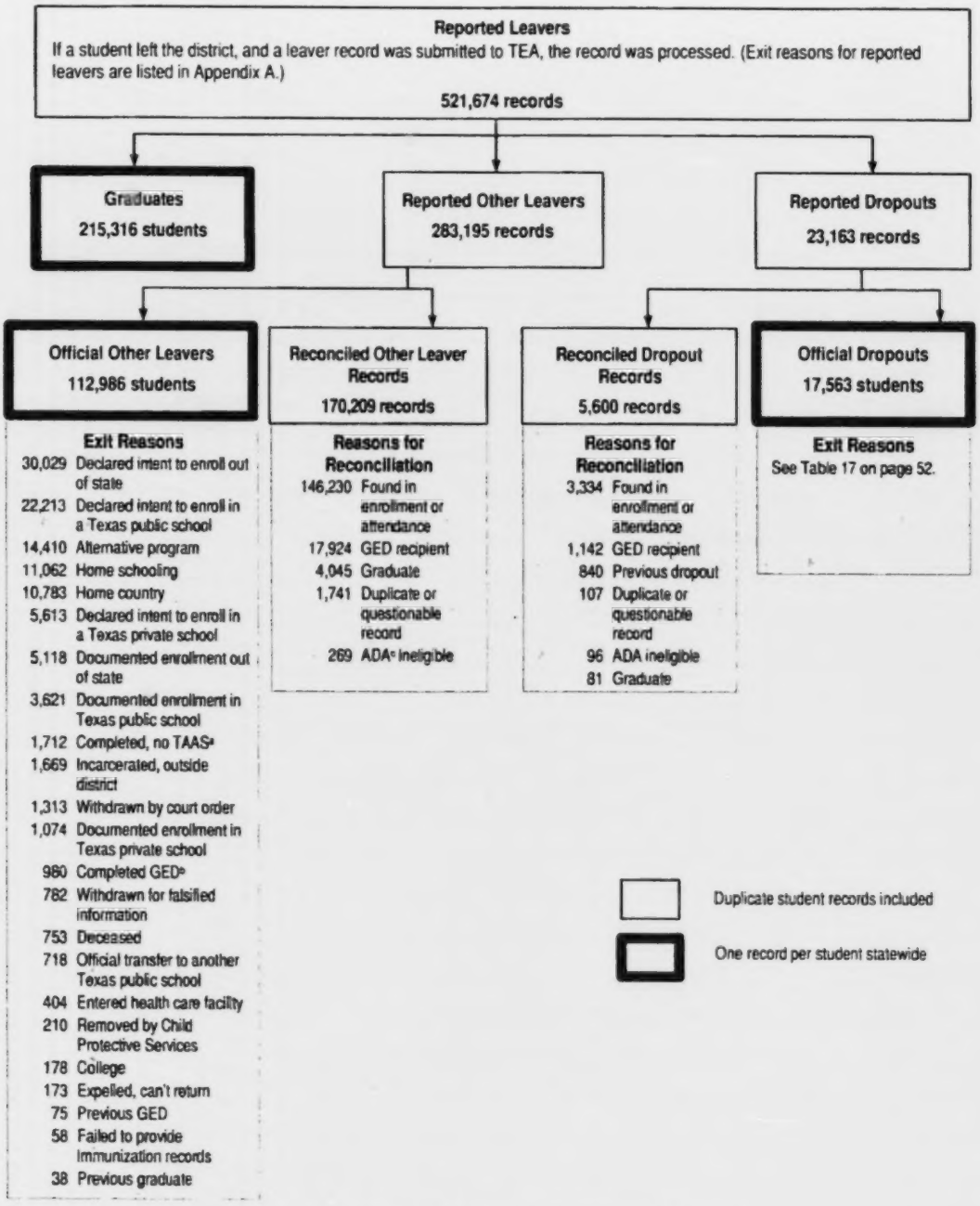
Figure 4
Final Processing of Year-to-Year Reporting of Students in Grades 7-12, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01


Reported Leavers
If a student left the district, and a leaver record was submitted to TEA, the record was processed. (Exit reasons for reported leavers are listed in Appendix A.)
521,674 records
Graduates
215,316 students
Reported Other Leavers
283,195 records
Reported Dropouts
23,163 records
Official Other Leavers
112,986 students
Reconciled Other Leaver Records
170,209 records
Reconciled Dropout Records
5,600 records
Official Dropouts
17,563 students
Exit Reasons
30,029 Declared intent to enroll out of state
22,213 Declared intent to enroll in a Texas public school
14,410 Alternative program
11,062 Home schooling
10,783 Home country
5,613 Declared intent to enroll in a Texas private school
5,118 Documented enrollment out of state
3,621 Documented enrollment in Texas public school
1,712 Completed, no TAAS[a]
1,669 Incarcerated, outside district
1,313 Withdrawn by court order
1,074 Documented enrollment in Texas private school
980 Completed GED[b]
782 Withdrawn for falsified information
753 Deceased
718 Official transfer to another Texas public school
404 Entered health care facility
210 Removed by Child Protective Services
178 College
173 Expelled, can't return
75 Previous GED
58 Failed to provide immunization records
38 Previous graduate
Reasons for Reconciliation
146,230 Found in enrollment or attendance
17,924 GED recipient
4,045 Graduate
1,741 Duplicate or questionable record
269 ADA[c] ineligible
Reasons for Reconciliation
3,334 Found in enrollment or attendance
1,142 GED recipient
840 Previous dropout
107 Duplicate or questionable record
96 ADA ineligible
81 Graduate
Exit Reasons
See Table 17 on page 52.
Duplicate student records included
One record per student statewide

[a]Texas Assessment of Academic Skills. [b]General Educational Development certificate. [c]Average Daily Attendance.

Leaver processing determines whether a student is a leaver, and if so, whether the student is a graduate, official dropout for accountability purposes, or an official other leaver. Each student can have only one record statewide as either a graduate, official dropout, or official other leaver.

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For 2000-01, no district had more than 1,000 underreported student records, and 40 had more than 10 percent underreported student records. For 1999-00, one district had more than 1,000 underreported student records, and 53 districts failed to account for more than 10 percent of students enrolled. The number of districts that accounted for all students (i.e., had no underreported students) continued to increase — from 79 in 1997-98 to 567 in 2000-01.

White and Hispanic students accounted for the largest numbers of enrollment and leaver records combined, as well as the largest numbers of underreported records (see Table 3). African American students were overrepresented among underreported students; they constituted only 14.5 percent of the students on the roster, but 24.9 percent of the underreported student records.

Table 3
Reported and Underreported Student Records in Grades 7-12, by Ethnicity, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

	Records received[a]		Underreported records	
Group	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
African American	277,825	14.5	3,915	24.9
Asian/Pacific Islander	52,224	2.7	359	2.3
Hispanic	715,764	37.4	5,379	34.2
Native American	5,496	0.3	44	0.3
White	861,122	45.0	6,055	38.4
State	1,912,431	100	15,752	100

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.
[a]Students enrolled in Grades 7-12 in 2000-01 for whom districts submitted either enrollment or leaver records the next fall.

School Leavers Reported by Districts

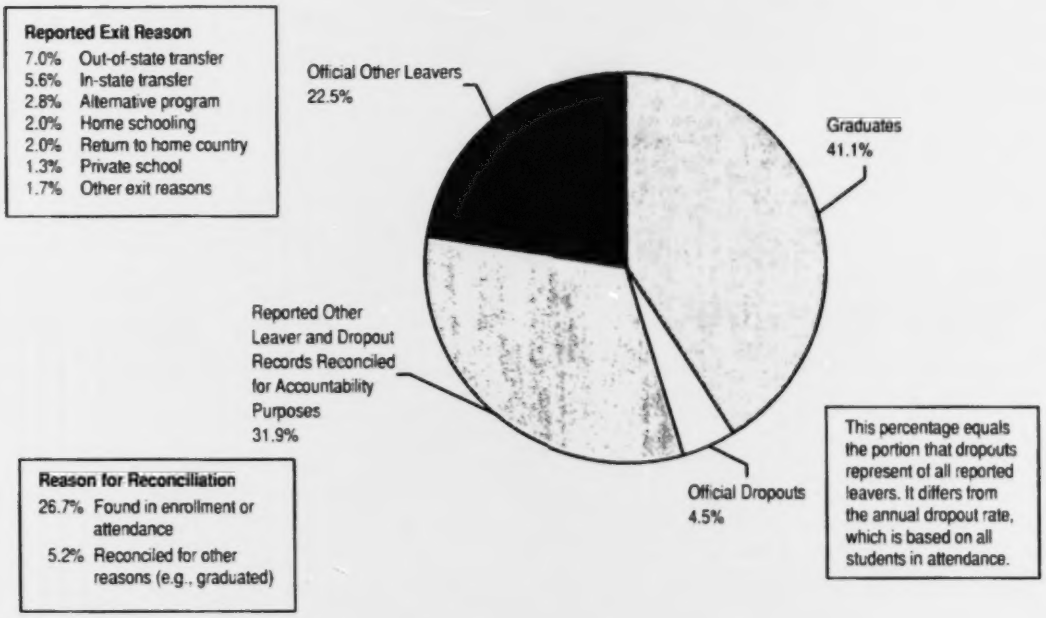
Of the 521,674 students who were reported to have left school in 2000-01, 41.3 percent (215,316) were graduates (see Figure 4 on page 12 and Figure 5 on page 14). Over 28 percent moved to other districts in the state. A total of 17,563 (3.4%) dropped out, and 112,986 (21.7%) left the Texas public school system for reasons other than dropout reasons. The percentage of students who dropped out (3.4%) equals the portion that dropouts represent of all reported leavers. It differs from the annual dropout rate which is based on all students in attendance. See Tables B-1 and B-2 in Appendix B for a comparison of the leaver results after TEA data processing for the past four years.

Consequences of Inaccurate Reporting

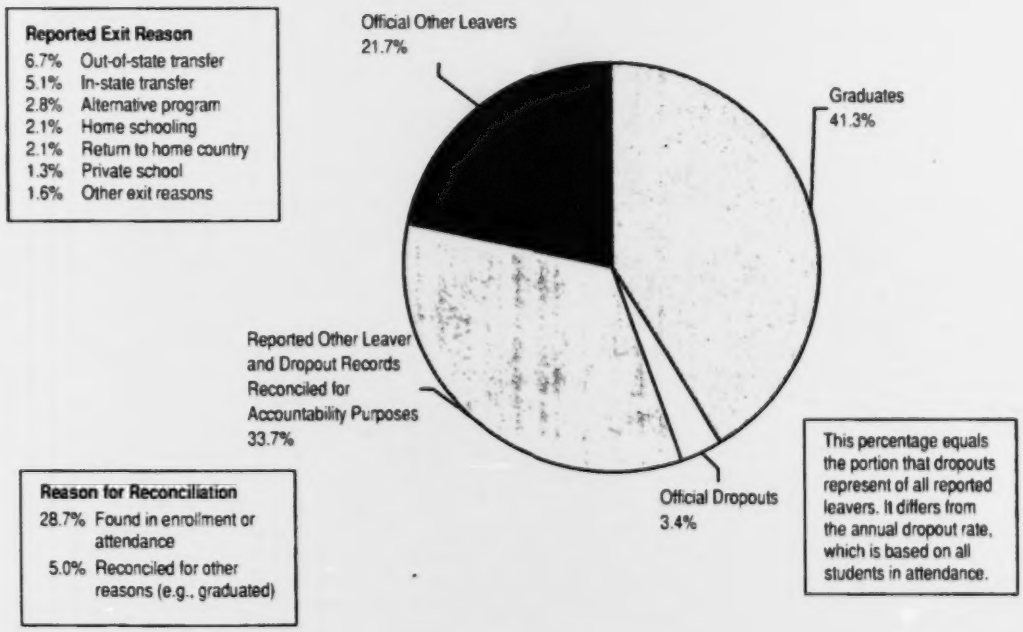
In 1999, following analysis of the first leaver data collection, new accountability ratings were introduced for districts and campuses with serious and systematic data reporting problems. The new district rating (*Unacceptable: Data Quality*) and new campus rating (*Acceptable: Data Issues*) were assigned when errors in the leaver data seriously compromised the ability of TEA to calculate dropout rates and, thus, determine accurate performance evaluations. Initially, two districts and 32 campuses

Figure 5
School Leavers Reported by Districts, Grades 7-12, Texas Public Schools, 1999-00 and 2000-01

School Year 1999-00


Reported Exit Reason
7.0% Out-of-state transfer
5.6% In-state transfer
2.8% Alternative program
2.0% Home schooling
2.0% Return to home country
1.3% Private school
1.7% Other exit reasons
Official Other Leavers
22.5%
Graduates
41.1%
Reported Other Leaver and Dropout Records Reconciled for Accountability Purposes
31.9%
Official Dropouts
4.5%
This percentage equals the portion that dropouts represent of all reported leavers. It differs from the annual dropout rate, which is based on all students in attendance.
Reason for Reconciliation
26.7% Found in enrollment or attendance
5.2% Reconciled for other reasons (e.g., graduated)

School Year 2000-01


Reported Exit Reason
6.7% Out-of-state transfer
5.1% In-state transfer
2.8% Alternative program
2.1% Home schooling
2.1% Return to home country
1.3% Private school
1.6% Other exit reasons
Official Other Leavers
21.7%
Graduates
41.3%
Reported Other Leaver and Dropout Records Reconciled for Accountability Purposes
33.7%
Official Dropouts
3.4%
This percentage equals the portion that dropouts represent of all reported leavers. It differs from the annual dropout rate, which is based on all students in attendance.
Reason for Reconciliation
28.7% Found in enrollment or attendance
5.0% Reconciled for other reasons (e.g., graduated)

were assigned the new ratings. A number of ratings were changed as a result of investigations conducted following release of the ratings. When 1999 ratings were finalized, four districts received the *Unacceptable: Data Quality* rating due to errors in leaver data, and 36 campuses received the *Acceptable: Data Issues* rating.

Accountability ratings for districts with leaver data problems were handled differently in 2000. Districts that exceeded a threshold for either the number or percentage of underreported students in Grades 7-12 could not be rated higher than *Academically Acceptable* in 2000. The thresholds were 1,000 or more underreported students or 10 percent or more underreported students. (Lower thresholds could trigger data inquiries but not immediate rating consequences.) The new label for the district rating assigned because of poor data quality is *Suspended: Data Inquiry*. The district rating is in effect until an agency investigation determines an appropriate performance-based rating. If the commissioner assigns a district rating of *Suspended: Data Inquiry*, then campuses affected by the data in question will also be rated *Suspended: Data Inquiry* until an agency investigation determines otherwise. No districts or campuses received the *Suspended: Data Inquiry* ratings in 2001. However, eight districts that would otherwise have been rated *Recognized* or *Exemplary* received *Academically Acceptable* ratings in 2001 due to large percentages of underreported students.

PEIMS Resources

Districts have been provided with a number of tools to assist them in reducing data errors before and during data submission. Published annually by TEA, the *PEIMS Data Standards* provide detailed reporting requirements, data element definitions, and TEA contact information. Question and answer documents are produced periodically and distributed to every school district and ESC and made available on the TEA website.

The leaver reason code table in the *1999-2000 PEIMS Data Standards* (TEA, 1999) included 41 leaver reason codes to identify why students left school. The high number of calls received from district and education service center (ESC) PEIMS coordinators during the 1999-00 fall data submission period demonstrated that distinctions between the leaver reason codes were not always clear. For this reason, an expanded leaver reason code table with a definition/clarification for each code is now included in the *PEIMS Data Standards* (see Appendix C). At the same time, the leaver reason code table was revised with fewer codes organized into broad categories. The new code table will be used to report 2001-02 leavers in the 2002-03 PEIMS data submission, the earliest that districts could make the changes needed to implement a new code table.

The *PEIMS Data Standards* require that districts have documentation to support the assigned leaver reason codes. Questions about use of specific leaver reason codes are often related to questions about the documentation requirements for the codes. To assist districts in meeting these requirements, specific documentation standards for each leaver reason code were included as an appendix to the *2001-2002 PEIMS Data Standards* (TEA, 2001c) (see Appendix C).

PEIMS coordinators in each ESC serve as consultants to the school districts in preparing their data submissions, as well as providing training and technical assistance. At the request of ESC PEIMS coordinators, TEA staff conduct workshops for district and ESC staff who work with the PEIMS data. A training-of-trainers format is used to assist participants in further disseminating the information. Workshops conducted through the Texas Education Telecommunications Network (TETN) videoconferencing network reach a broader audience and allow interactions between staff from the different ESC regions. Twice a year, one- or two-day PEIMS coordinator training sessions are held in Austin to review changes to the *PEIMS Data Standards*.

A Person Identification Database (PID) error rate policy being phased in over six years beginning in 2000-01 requires that the student identification information provided to TEA as part of each district's PEIMS data submissions meets a standard for accuracy. Student data submitted in 2005-06 must have 10 or fewer student records with PID errors or a PID error rate of 1.0 percent or lower. The PID system is used by TEA to manage and store identifying information on students reported to TEA through PEIMS. The system verifies that social security number or alternative identification number, last name, first name, and date of birth match on every record submitted for an individual. Although the overall PID error rate for the state has declined with each data submission since student enrollment data were first collected in 1990-91, PID errors continue to complicate efforts to link data across two or more data submissions. PID errors do not affect the calculation of the annual dropout rate. However, longitudinal performance measures of school completers and school leavers require linking many years of data. In addition, greater reliance is being placed on desk audits of district leaver data submissions. Because these audits require that student data be linked across years, the accuracy of PID information has become more critical. Moreover, inaccuracies in student identification information can cause students for whom records have been submitted to appear on district lists of underreported students.

Software made available to districts shortly after the beginning of each school year enables them to identify potential data problems and correct data errors before the data submission is due. In 1999-00, TEA introduced a web-based enhancement that gives districts more time to correct PID errors before submitting their PEIMS data to TEA.

The PEIMS web page (http://www.tea.state.tx.us/peims/) also provides on-line access to general information about PEIMS, the *PEIMS Data Standards*, other reporting instructions, and contact information for inquiries. Individuals can request to be notified by e-mail anytime new information related to PEIMS is posted on the TEA website.

Policy Issues Regarding Data Quality and Leaver Reporting

Overview

The credibility of the accountability system depends in part on the reliability of the data used in the performance measures. Leaver reporting represents a dramatic improvement over graduate and dropout reporting in the ability to account for all students in the Texas public education system. Since

the 1997-98 school year, districts are required to report withdrawal information on students who dropped out or graduated, as well as those who left school for other reasons. Four years of leaver data will provide sufficient information to track students individually over their high school careers as they enter and leave the system for different reasons. In combination with other data sources, the leaver reporting system can provide a more accurate picture and a better understanding of long-term student progress in the state. As the leaver reporting system evolves, policymakers remain mindful of a number of data quality issues.

Underreported Student Records

Underreported students, those Grade 7-12 students served for whom districts fail to submit leaver or enrollment records the next year, are not factored into the dropout calculation. Although leaver reporting has improved significantly since it was implemented in 1998-99, there are lingering concerns that school districts may not be identifying all dropouts.

The primary drawback to counting underreported students as dropouts is that the dropout rate would change from a dropout measure to a measure of dropouts and data reporting problems combined. Trying to use the dropout definition to correct a data quality problem would produce a dropout rate that is no longer meaningful as an indicator of educational performance.

In-State Transfers

Out of 164,459 students reported to have withdrawn in 2000-01 to transfer to other public school districts in the state, 137,907 students (83.9 percent) for whom the district received transfer requests or who withdrew with documented intent to enroll in other Texas public school districts actually did so and were found in enrollment files or other public education data files (see Figure B-1 in Appendix B). In 16.1 percent of the cases, students could not be found in the enrollment records submitted by other districts. Some of the students who withdrew intending to enroll elsewhere may not have been found because their student records did not match; others, because they enrolled in private schools, alternative schools or GED preparation programs, or were being home schooled. It is also possible that some never returned to school.

Districts are not required to track students who withdraw with intent to enroll elsewhere to confirm that they do re-enroll. Documentation that shows intent at the time the student withdraws to enroll elsewhere has been considered sufficient evidence that the student is not a dropout under both the Texas and national definitions. This documentation is typically a withdrawal form signed by the parent or guardian, although other types of documentation are accepted (see Appendix C).

The percentage of students who withdrew to move to another public school but could not be found in enrollment in a public school dropped from 31 percent in 1997-98 to 16 percent in 2000-01. Nevertheless, concerns remain that students who fail to re-enroll elsewhere are never counted as dropouts. The primary drawback to adding unverified transfers to the dropout count is that the statuses of these students are not known. Adding students who may or may not be dropouts to the

dropout rate would distort the meaning of the dropout measure and decrease its effectiveness as a performance indicator. As part of the accountability system safeguards audit process, districts with unusually high percentages of unverified in-state transfers are investigated.

Data Documentation and Investigations

Leaver data are self-reported by districts, unlike test results, which are reported directly to TEA by the testing companies. A 1996 audit by the State Auditor's Office (SAO, 1996) and TEA data investigations in 1999 found that districts often had not documented student withdrawals correctly. In some cases, investigators found no documentation. In other cases, however, districts were not clear about the documentation requirements. Given the high stakes associated with use of leaver data in the accountability system, concerns persist about the accuracy of the data submitted by districts.

While TEA has taken steps to clarify data reporting requirements, resources available to monitor the accuracy of district submissions continue to be limited. Some audits can be completed at the agency, but others require on-site visits. Because few staff are available to conduct inquiries, data investigations must focus on the most serious problems identified. Consideration must be given as well to limited means at the district level. School districts have had to redirect financial and staff resources to the task of determining the whereabouts of students who left without notifying them.

Legislation passed in 2001 requires all districts to have their dropout data audited by independent auditors, beginning with the 2001-02 dropout data submitted in fall 2002 (TEC §39.055, 2001). The scope and format of the audit, and use of audit results in the accountability system, will be determined by the commissioner of education. Preliminary information can be found on the website of the Division of School Financial Audits at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/school.finance/audit/resguide8/dropoutaudit/index.html. A report published by the SAO in May 2002, *The Quality of the State's Public Education Accountability Information*, recommended that the agency report the results of the independent audits. *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts, 2001-02*, will include the results of the first audits, which are due in April 2003.

Measures of Student Progress Through Secondary School

Reporting and Use of Measures

For more than a decade, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has used data collected annually from school districts to produce various counts and rates that represent the degree to which students are successfully completing school. Which measures are reported and how they are used have changed over time in response to numerous factors, such as data quality and computer technology, research and evaluation needs, policy requirements, and public interest.

Statewide public reporting of student performance and progress began in 1985-86. A year before, the Texas Legislature had passed a law (Texas Education Code [TEC] §21.258, 1986) requiring that all school districts publish annual performance reports (APRs). The reports were intended to inform communities about the quality of education in their school districts and to provide educators and policymakers with information needed to analyze performance trends. For the most part, APRs were produced by the districts themselves, although the reports began to include aggregate student data collected and compiled by TEA shortly after they were introduced. In 1988, the reports included agency counts of district enrollment and high school graduates.

Responding to growing public concern about dropouts, TEA supplemented APR data with annual reports on public school dropouts (TEA, 1989). Using student-level data from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), the report presented actual annual dropout counts and rates for Grades 7-12 by county, district, and campus. It also included five-year projections of cross-sectional and longitudinal dropout rates for the state, as mandated by statute (TEC §11.205, 1988).

In 1989, the Texas Legislature required the State Board of Education to adopt a set of student performance indicators that would serve as the basis for school district accreditation (TEC §21.7531, 1990). When the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) was established a year later, annual AEIS reports replaced the agency information previously distributed through APRs. Among the initial performance indicators adopted by the board and reported through AEIS were annual graduation and dropout rates. In 1991, TEA began reporting these rates in two additional publications: *Snapshot*, a compilation of district profile data; and *Pocket Edition*, a small brochure highlighting statewide education statistics.

With adoption of Chapter 35 of the Texas Education Code in 1993, the legislature directed that AEIS data form the foundation of a performance-based accountability system to rate school districts and campuses. One of the performance indicators targeted in statute for this purpose was dropout rates. In 1994, annual Grade 7-12 dropout rates from the prior year were used for *Exemplary* and *Recognized* ratings only. The next year, TEA began using annual dropout rates in the accountability system for all ratings categories. Also in 1995, the agency was required to report detailed information about dropouts in the comprehensive biennial and interim reports to the Texas Legislature (TEC §39.182 and §39.185, 1996). In 2001, these reports were combined into the *Comprehensive Annual*

Report on Texas Public Schools (TEA, 2001b), and the dropout data were reported to the legislature in this publication.

Interest in reporting actual, rather than estimated, longitudinal indicators of student success or failure in school had remained high since student-level data were first collected through PEIMS in 1988. Such measures could provide valuable information about how well the public education system was serving students throughout their school careers. In 1996, TEA investigated using a high school completion rate as an alternative or supplement to an annual dropout rate in the accountability system (TEA, 1996). Four-year completion rates for the classes of 1996 and 1997 were published as report-only indicators in the 1998 AEIS reports. By 1998, the agency had sufficient years of PEIMS data to follow the progress of the members of a seventh-grade class through high school to determine their final statuses. Actual Grade 7-12 longitudinal dropout rates for the class of 1998 were included in AEIS a year later.

In 2000, separate longitudinal dropout rates and completion rates were replaced with a four-year high school completion/student status series. The new series is made up of four complementary longitudinal rates: graduation, General Educational Development (GED) certification, school continuation, and dropout. Using a revised method, the four rates add to 100 percent. Completion/student status rates appeared for the first time as report-only indicators in the 2000 AEIS reports. In 2001, the Texas Legislature added the Grade 9-12 completion rate to the list of performance indicators in statute (TEC §39.051, 2001).

Comparing Completion and Dropout Rates

Components of Rates

While a number of different rates are currently used to measure the degree to which students either leave school or complete their education, the distinctions between them are not always apparent. To understand how and why dropout and completion rates vary, it is important to look at some of the factors that can affect how they are calculated. These include the definition of a dropout or of school completion, the accuracy of the data, the time period covered, and the student population considered. Some rates, for example, are annual, whereas others cover multiple years. Some are based on actual student-level data, whereas others use estimated student counts. Table 4 on page 22 compares the most common methods of calculating dropout and completion/student status rates, advantages and disadvantages of each, and the rates they produce for the 1999-00 and 2000-01 school years. Descriptions of the different methods follow.

Annual Dropout Rates

Description. The annual dropout rate is the percentage of students who drop out of school during one school year.

Why Is the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Dropout Rate Low?

A concern underlying much of the criticism of the annual dropout rate for Texas reported by TEA is that it understates the problem of dropouts in Texas. Following are some of the reasons the TEA dropout rate is low.

Dropout Definition

- **Grades covered.** By law, the TEA dropout rate includes students in Grades 7 and 8. Because these students drop out at much lower rates than high school students, including them brings down the rate. The Grade 7-12 annual dropout rate for 2000-01 was ***1.0*** percent, compared to ***1.4*** percent for Grades 9-12.

- **Data processing enhancements.** An automated data search allows TEA to remove students from the dropout count who are found to be enrolled elsewhere or to have graduated or received General Educational Development (GED) certificates. Although these students would not be considered dropouts under most definitions, a less sophisticated data processing system would not be able to identify and remove them. (Few states collect individual student-level data. Appendix D compares dropout information for many states.) Had these students not been excluded, the annual dropout rate would have increased three tenths of a percentage point in 2000-01 – from ***1.0*** percent to ***1.3*** percent.

- **Accountability definition.** Some categories of students who would typically be considered dropouts are removed from the dropout count to avoid unintended consequences for students or unfairly penalizing districts for dropout circumstances outside their control. The following categories of students are considered dropouts by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) but are excluded from the TEA dropout count: (1) students who were counted as dropouts in previous school years; (2) students who withdrew to enroll in approved adult education GED preparation programs; (3) seniors who met all graduation requirements but did not pass the exit-level Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS); (4) students who enrolled but were not eligible for state funding; (5) students who were reported as dropouts from more than one district and whose last districts attended cannot be determined; and (6) students who return to school by January of the following school year. Including these six categories of students in the dropout count in 2000-01 would have increased the annual dropout rate from ***1.0*** percent to ***2.8*** percent.

- **In-State Transfers.** In 2000-01, there were 26,552 students reported as withdrawing to enroll in other Texas public school districts for whom subsequent enrollment records were not found. Neither TEA nor NCES requires districts to track students who withdraw with intent to enroll elsewhere to confirm they do re-enroll. It is not known how many of these students enrolled out of state or in private schools, were being home schooled, or whose records could not be matched across data collections. Including these students in the dropout count would have increased the annual dropout rate from ***1.0*** percent to ***2.4*** percent.

- **GED Recipients.** GED recipients are not considered dropouts under either the TEA or NCES dropout definition or under the definitions used by most other states. Including GED recipients in the dropout count in 2000-01 would have increased the annual rate from ***1.0*** percent to ***1.9*** percent.

Dropout Rate Calculation

- **Annual rate.** The annual dropout rate is low compared to other rates because it is a "snapshot" rate, measuring how many students drop out during one school year. Longitudinal rates, on the other hand, measure how many students drop out before they finish high school, covering the four or six years from the time they enter Grade 9 or Grade 7. The Grade 7-12 annual dropout rate in 2000-01 was ***1.0*** percent, compared to a Grade 7 longitudinal dropout rate of ***6.8*** percent for the class of 2001.

- **Cumulative enrollment.** TEA uses cumulative enrollment, rather than fall enrollment, in the dropout rate denominator. Although cumulative enrollment is the preferred count for calculating dropout rates, it can reduce the dropout rate by increasing the size of the denominator. The 2000-01 dropout rate was ***1.0*** percent using cumulative enrollment and ***1.1*** percent using the fall enrollment count

Data Quality

- **Underreported students.** In 2000-01, there were 15,752 Grade 7-12 students for whom districts failed to submit a leaver or enrollment record. This undoubtedly included many students whose records could not be matched to the prior-year records due to errors in student identifying information. Adding these underreported records in the dropout count would have increased the dropout rate from ***1.0*** percent to ***1.8*** percent.

Table 4
Common Methods of Measuring Student Progress Through School

	Annual dropout rate	Completion/ student status rate	Longitudinal dropout rate	Attrition rate
Description	The percentage of students who drop out of school during one school year.	The percentage of students from a class of 7th or 9th graders who graduate, receive a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, or are still enrolled at the time the class graduates.	The percentage of students from a class of 7th or 9th graders who drop out before completing high school.	The percentage of students from a class of 9th graders not enrolled in Grade 12 four years later.
Calculation	Divide the number of students who drop out during a school year by the total number of students enrolled that year.	Divide the number of students who drop out by the end of Grade 12, or the number who complete school, by the total number of students in the original 7th- or 9th-grade class. Students who transfer in over the years are added to the class; students who transfer out are subtracted.		Subtract Grade 12 enrollment from Grade 9 enrollment four years earlier, then divide by the Grade 9 enrollment. The rate may be adjusted for estimated population change over the four years.
Advantages	• Measure of annual performance. • Requires only one year of data. • Can be calculated for any school or district with students in any of the grades covered. • Can be disaggregated by grade level.	• More consistent with the public's understanding of a dropout rate. • Districts have more time to encourage dropouts to return to school before being held accountable. • More stable measure over time. • The completion/student status rate is a more positive indicator than the dropout rate, measuring school success rather than failure.		Provides a simple measure of school leavers when aggregate enrollment numbers are the only data available.
Disadvantages	• Produces the lowest rate of any method. • May not correspond to the public's understanding of a dropout rate.	• Requires multiple years of data; one year of inaccurate student identification data can remove a student from the measure. • Program improvements may not be reflected for several years, and districts are not held accountable for some dropouts until years after they drop out. • Can only be calculated for schools that have all the grades in the calculation and that have had all those grades for the number of years necessary to calculate the rate. Since few high schools have Grades 7 and 8, longitudinal dropout and completion rates are often calculated for Grades 9-12. • Does not produce a dropout rate by grade.		• Produces the highest rate of any method. • Does not distinguish attrition that results from dropping out from that resulting from grade-level retentions, transfers to other schools, early graduation, etc. • Does not always correctly reflect the status of dropouts; adjustments for growth can further distort the rate. • Cannot be used in accountability systems because it is an estimate.
Remarks	A Grade 7-12 annual dropout rate has been calculated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) since 1987-88. This is the rate used in the accountability system.	The method used to calculate the 1998-99 completion/student status rate was revised so the longitudinal dropout rate and completion/student status rate add to 100%.	TEA began calculating an actual Grade 7-12 longitudinal dropout rate with the 1997-98 school year.	The attrition rate reported by TEA is not adjusted for growth.
TEA 1999-00	Annual dropout rate: Grades 7-12 1.3% Grades 9-12 1.8%	Completion/ student status rate: Grades 7-12 92.3% Grades 9-12 92.8%	Longitudinal dropout rate: Grades 7-12 7.7% Grades 9-12 7.2%	Unadjusted attrition rate: Grades 7-12 25.0% Grades 9-12 36.6%
TEA 2000-01	Annual dropout rate: Grades 7-12 1.0% Grades 9-12 1.4%	Completion/ student status rate: Grades 7-12 93.2% Grades 9-12 93.8%	Longitudinal dropout rate: Grades 7-12 6.8% Grades 9-12 6.2%	Unadjusted attrition rate: Grades 7-12 24.6% Grades 9-12 36.7%

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Calculation. An annual dropout rate is calculated by dividing the number of students who drop out during a single school year by the total number of students enrolled that same year. Annual dropout rates reported by different organizations may differ because: (1) different grade levels are included in the calculation; (2) dropouts are defined and counted differently; (3) total student counts are taken at different times of the school year; or (4) the data systems employed provide different levels of precision.

Advantages. An annual dropout rate measures what happens in a school, district, or state during one school year and can be considered a measure of annual performance. Because it is based on a simple mathematical operation and requires data for only one school year, it has the greatest potential to produce accurate rates that are comparable across schools, districts, or states. It can be calculated for any school that has students in any of the grades included in the calculation, allowing the largest number of campuses to be included in an accountability system.

Annual dropout rates can also be calculated for student groups based on demographic characteristics (ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age), special program participation (special education, bilingual/English as a second language), or other educational factors (grade level, at risk, overage for grade). This makes an annual dropout rate a practical tool to help educators determine who is dropping out and why – essential information for developing and evaluating dropout prevention and recovery programs.

Disadvantages. Because an annual dropout rate uses data for only one year, it produces the lowest dropout rate of any of the methods. There is concern that reporting low dropout rates may understate the severity of the dropout problem. This concern is based in part on the perception that an annual dropout rate is not consistent with the public's understanding of what a dropout rate is measuring.

TEA Reporting. An annual dropout rate was first calculated by TEA in 1987-88 as the number of dropouts from Grades 7-12 divided by the total number of students enrolled in Grades 7-12 the fall of that same year. The same calculation was used for the first five years of dropout reporting.

In 1992-93, districts began submitting individual student attendance records as part of the PEIMS data collection. For the first time, TEA was able to compute cumulative enrollment – the number of students in attendance in Grades 7-12 at any time during the previous school year. Cumulative enrollment more closely parallels the required reporting of dropouts, which covers students who drop out at any time during the school year and includes students who enroll after the fall enrollment count. Cumulative enrollment also provides the most consistent data for comparisons of dropout rates between districts and campuses with different mobility rates. For these reasons, cumulative enrollment replaced fall enrollment in the dropout rate calculation. This is the only change that has been made to the calculation during the 13 years the annual dropout rate has been reported by TEA.

Table 5 on page 24 shows TEA 2000-01 annual dropout rates by ethnicity and socioeconomic status. In 2000-01, 1.0 percent of students in Grades 7-12 dropped out of school. (Annual dropout rates beginning with 1987-88 are presented in Table H-7 in Appendix H.) An annual dropout rate for

Grades 9-12 was also calculated for 2000-01 dropouts. The statewide Grade 9-12 dropout rate was 1.4 percent.

Table 5
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12 and Grades 9-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

	Dropout rate (%)	
Group	Grades 7-12	Grades 9-12
African American	1.3	1.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.5	0.7
Hispanic	1.4	2.0
Native American	0.9	1.2
White	0.5	0.8
Economically disadvantaged	1.0	1.5
State	1.0	1.4

Longitudinal Completion and Dropout Rates

Description. A completion rate is the percentage of students from a class of ninth graders or seventh graders who complete their high school education by their anticipated graduation date. Completion may be defined as those who graduate, receive a GED, and/or those who continue in high school. A longitudinal dropout rate is the percentage of students from the same class who drop out before completing their high school education.

Calculation. Calculating longitudinal rates requires tracking a cohort of students over five to seven years, from the time they enter Grade 9 or Grade 7 until the fall following their anticipated graduation date. Depending on the definition of a completer, the completion rate is the number of students who graduate or receive GED certificates, divided by the total number of students in the cohort who had final statuses. The rate may also include the statuses of continuers, or students who remain in school after the class graduates. The longitudinal dropout rate is the number of students who drop out divided by the total number of students in the class. Students who transfer in over the years are added to the original class as it progresses through the grade levels; students who transfer out are subtracted from the class.

Longitudinal rates reported by different organizations may differ because they use: (1) different starting grades in the calculation (typically Grade 9 or Grade 7); (2) different definitions of a school completer or dropout; (3) different definitions of a cohort or class of students; or (4) different underlying methods to calculate the rates. Few organizations have the data and computer capacity to track individual students over a number of years, so longitudinal rates are often estimated based on state-level data or sample data from surveys.

Advantages. One advantage of a longitudinal measure is that it is more consistent with the public's understanding of what a school completer or dropout is – someone who enters Grade 9 or Grade 7 and, during the next five or seven years, either completes high school or a GED, remains enrolled, or drops out. Also, districts have more time to encourage dropouts to return to school before being held accountable for those students. Because the status of a student is not determined until the fall after the anticipated graduation date, districts have up to five or seven years to bring a dropout back to school. A longitudinal measure can also be expected to be more stable over time than an annual measure. Fluctuations in an annual dropout rate may not necessarily reflect the long-term success or failure of a district dropout prevention program.

The completion rate is more positive than the dropout rate, measuring school success instead of failure. Like most indicators of school success, an increase in the completion rate represents improved performance. Because a separate rate can be reported for each status, such as graduating or receiving a GED certificate, completion rates can provide more information with which to evaluate districts than the dropout rate.

Disadvantages. Calculating a longitudinal rate requires linking individual student records from multiple sources across five or seven years. An error in basic identifying information can prevent linking one record to others for a student. The method also requires that decisions be made about how to classify students who change schools and move in and out of special programs over time. Changes in data collection practices and in the dropout definition over time must also be incorporated into the method.

Continuing students who drop out after their anticipated graduation date are never counted as dropouts under a longitudinal method. Tracking students for an additional year would undoubtedly result in changes in both directions – dropouts returning to school or receiving GED certificates and continuing students dropping out before they graduate.

Longitudinal rates can only be calculated for schools that have all the grade levels included in the rate and that have had all those grades for the number of years necessary to calculate the rate. Since few high schools include Grades 7 and 8, high school completion rates are calculated for classes of Grade 9 students more commonly than for classes of Grade 7 students.

A longitudinal method does not produce a dropout rate by grade. The completion rates and longitudinal dropout rates for special programs will reflect decisions about how to classify students who move in and out of those programs. For example, the longitudinal dropout rate for students in special education programs may include only those students who are receiving special education services the year they drop out.

Improvements in dropout prevention programs may not be reflected in a longitudinal dropout rate immediately because the rate is based on the final status of a single class rather than all grades in the school. At the same time, many dropouts are not included in a longitudinal dropout rate until several years after they drop out. This means districts may be held accountable in one year for students who dropped out several years earlier.

TEA Reporting. Due to interest on the part of educators and policymakers in a longitudinal completion rate, TEA has calculated completion rates for six classes of ninth-grade students, the graduating classes of 1996 through 2001 (see Table H-10 in Appendix H). The method used to calculate these rates was revised so that the completion/student status rates and longitudinal dropout rate add to 100 percent. The completion/student status rates include three components: graduates, GED recipients, and continuing students. The longitudinal dropout rate makes up a fourth component. The longitudinal rate is based on the same definition of dropouts used in the TEA annual dropout rate.

The longitudinal rates for the class of 2001 track students who began Grade 9 for the first time in 1997-98. Completion/student status and longitudinal dropout rates are reported in AEIS district reports and on the campus reports for high schools with continuous enrollment in Grades 9-12 for the preceding four years. The four separate rates are reported, as shown in Table 6. About 81.1 percent of students in the class of 2001 graduated, 4.8 percent received a GED certificate, 7.9 percent were continuing in school after the class graduated, and 6.2 percent dropped out.

Table 6
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates, Grades 9-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, Class of 2001

Group	Graduated (%)	Received GED[a] (%)	Continued (%)	Dropped out (%)	Total (%)
African American	77.7	3.3	10.6	8.4	100
Asian/Pacific Islander	90.0	2.0	4.9	3.1	100
Hispanic	73.5	4.3	12.6	9.6	100
Native American	76.4	7.5	7.8	8.4	100
White	86.8	5.8	3.9	3.5	100
Economically disadvantaged	73.2	4.6	12.3	9.9	100
State	81.1	4.8	7.9	6.2	100

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.
[a]General Educational Development certificate.

TEA calculated a Grade 7-12 longitudinal dropout rate for the first time in 1997-98. The longitudinal dropout rate for the class of 2001 tracks students who began Grade 7 in 1995-96. Table 7 shows TEA class of 2001 Grade 7-12 longitudinal dropout rates by ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Statewide, about 6.8 percent of students in the class of 2001 dropped out before completing high school. Longitudinal completion/student status rates are also calculated for Grades 7-12. About 79.8 percent of the class of 2001 graduated, 4.7 percent received a GED certificate, and 8.7 percent were continuing in school after their class graduated (see Table 12 on page 46).

Table 7
Longitudinal Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, Class of 2001

Group	Dropout rate (%)
African American	9.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.5
Hispanic	10.6
Native American	7.9
White	3.7
Economically disadvantaged	11.2
State	6.8

Attrition Rates

Description. An attrition rate is the percentage of students from a class of ninth graders not enrolled in Grade 12 four years later.

Calculation. The attrition rate is calculated by subtracting Grade 12 enrollment from Grade 9 enrollment four years earlier, and dividing by Grade 9 enrollment.

Advantages. The attrition rate provides a simple measure of school leavers when aggregate enrollment numbers are the only data available.

Disadvantages. The attrition rate does not take into account the reasons beginning and ending enrollments differ. Attrition that occurs because of dropouts cannot be distinguished from attrition that occurs because of retention, transfers, or early graduation. For this reason, the attrition rate can fluctuate because of factors that are not considered reflections of school performance, such as the student mobility rate, and factors Texas has chosen not to include as performance measures, such as retention rates. When used as a proxy for a longitudinal dropout rate, the attrition rate overstates the dropout problem. Figure E-1 in Appendix E compares the TEA Grade 9-12 longitudinal dropout rate and Grade 9-12 attrition rate using the class of 1999 as an example.

Furthermore, the attrition rate does not always correctly reflect the status of dropouts. The Grade 7-12 longitudinal dropout rate is higher than the Grade 9-12 longitudinal dropout rate because the Grade 7-12 rate includes students who dropped out of Grades 7-8, as well as students who dropped out of Grades 9-12. The opposite is true of the attrition rate. An attrition rate based on Grade 7 is lower than the Grade 9 attrition rate. Also, dropouts who return to school but are behind a grade count as part of the attrition rate.

Differences in growth rates across grade levels and between schools and districts can distort the attrition rate, and the calculations sometimes include growth adjustments. However, the adjustments

themselves may cause distortions. For a school or district that is not growing but has an effective dropout prevention program, a growth adjustment would inflate the attrition rate.

Finally, because the attrition rate is an estimate, it should not be used as a performance indicator in a high-stakes accountability system.

TEA Reporting. TEA calculated a Grade 9-12 attrition rate for 2001 by comparing 2000-01 Grade 12 enrollment to 1997-98 Grade 9 enrollment, without adjustments for growth. As Table 8 shows, the Grade 9-12 attrition rate for the state was 36.7 percent. Using the same methods, TEA also calculated a Grade 7-12 attrition rate of 24.6 percent for 2001.

Table 8
Attrition Rate, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 2001

	Attrition rate (%)	
Group	Grades 7-12	Grades 9-12
African American	28.7	43.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	–11.9	9.3
Hispanic	32.3	47.3
Native American	18.2	32.7
White	19.3	26.5
Economically disadvantaged	53.6	56.9
State	24.6	36.7

State Dropout Policy

Current Statutory Requirements

Statute requires that the accountability system performance indicators include dropout rates (Texas Education Code [TEC] §39.051, 2001). It does not specify the type of dropout rate calculation. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has calculated an annual dropout rate for Grades 7-12 since 1987-88. A longitudinal dropout rate for Grades 7-12, which requires seven years of student-level enrollment and dropout data, was first calculated for the class of 1998.

As a key element of the state's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), dropout rates play an important role in accountability ratings. The annual dropout rate for Grades 7-12 is a component of district and campus accountability ratings (TEC §39.072, 2001). AEIS data are also used to administer statutory recognition programs (TEC §39.091, 2001) and to generate district and campus performance reports (TEC §39.053, 2001), as well as school report cards for distribution to parents (TEC §39.052, 2001).

In addition to the accountability ratings, TEA is required to report dropout rates to the governor and legislature in the *Comprehensive Annual Report on Texas Public Schools* (TEC §39.182, 2001). This legislation requires that the following types of dropout information be reported: (1) annual dropout rates of students in Grades 7-12, expressed in the aggregate and by grade level; (2) completion rates of students in Grades 9-12; (3) projected cross-sectional and longitudinal dropout rates for Grades 9-12 for five years, assuming no state action is taken to reduce the rates; and (4) a description of a systematic, measurable plan for reducing the projected dropout rates to 5 percent or less. See Appendix F for a history of the development of state dropout policy.

TEA Dropout Definition

Who Is Counted as a Dropout?

A dropout is defined as a student who is enrolled in school at some time during the school year but either leaves school during the school year without an approved excuse or completes the school year and does not return the following year. In 2000-01, a student reported to have left school for any of the following reasons was considered a dropout for accountability purposes:

- a student who left to enroll in an alternative program and was not in compliance with compulsory attendance;
- a student who left to enroll in an alternative program and was not working toward a General Educational Development (GED) certificate or a high school diploma;
- a student who left to enroll in college but was not pursuing a degree;
- a student whose enrollment was revoked due to absences;

- a student who was expelled for criminal behavior and could return to school but had not;
- a student who was expelled for reasons other than criminal behavior;
- a student who left because of low or failing grades, poor attendance, language problems, exit-level Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) failure, or age;
- a student who left to pursue a job or join the military;
- a student who left because of pregnancy or marriage;
- a student who left because of homelessness or non-permanent residency;
- a student who left because of alcohol or other drug abuse problems;
- a student who did not return to school after completing a term in a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program; or
- a student who left for another or an unknown reason.

Who Is Not Counted as a Dropout?

Accountability System Considerations. The current TEA definition of a dropout grew out of the accountability system used to rate the performance of districts and campuses. Consequently, the definition excludes some students who might be considered dropouts under other dropout definitions. Some groups of school leavers are excluded from the dropout count to avoid unfairly penalizing districts for dropout circumstances outside their control. For example, due to the difficulty of tracking students who have left the country, students who withdraw from school to return to their home countries are not counted as dropouts, even if they do not indicate intent to re-enroll in school. To count these students as dropouts would inflate the dropout rates of districts that have disproportionate numbers of foreign students.

Others are excluded to avoid unintended negative consequences for students. For example, repeat dropouts (students who were counted as dropouts in previous years, returned to school, then dropped out again) are removed from the official dropout count. Because students who drop out but return to school are more likely to drop out again, including repeat dropouts in the count could discourage districts from aggressively trying to recover these students.

Table 9 on pages 31 and 32 lists each group of students excluded from the dropout count under the current accountability definition and the rationale for not counting those students as dropouts. Appendix G describes the evolution of the current dropout definition.

Table 9
Leavers Not Counted as Dropouts for Accountability Purposes by the Texas Education Agency

Reason for leaving	Rationale for not counting student as dropout
Completed high school program	
Students who graduate.	Students who have graduated should not be considered dropouts for accountability purposes, even if they later return to school to make up some deficiencies.
Students who earn a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.	The GED testing program was originally developed as a means of objectively certifying whether an individual had educational development equivalent to that of a high school graduate. Legislation was implemented 11 years ago to permit students who were still enrolled in public school, but who were seriously credit deficient, to earn GED certificates. In light of this legislative decision, it was consistent to continue to count GED recipients as completers rather than dropouts after the dropout definition was removed from statute.
Seniors who meet all graduation requirements but do not pass the exit-level Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).	These are students who have completed all coursework requirements for a diploma. Under the definition in law before the rewrite of the Texas Education Code (TEC), they were counted as dropouts. Legislative direction given at the time the TEC was rewritten indicated that, in deleting the dropout definition from code, it was intended that these students not be counted as dropouts. They are not counted as completers/continuing students under the Texas Education Agency (TEA) completion rate definition unless they are still enrolled in school.
Moved to other educational setting	
Students who withdraw to enter college early.	These are students who are actively pursuing higher education by enrolling in specific degree plans. The *PEIMS Data Standards* are very specific in requiring the reporting districts to have documentation of enrollment in pursuit of an Associate's or Bachelor's degree (Simply taking a class at the community college does not permit a district to use this leaver reason code.). Because the student's education has neither ceased nor been interrupted, it is inappropriate to count the student as a dropout.
Students whose enrollment in other Texas public schools is documented, or for whom the district has received acceptable documentation of enrollment in public school outside the state or in private school.	Students who have left the district but are known to be continuing a high school program or its equivalent are not counted as dropouts.
Students who withdraw with intent to enroll in school outside Texas or in private school.	These are students for whom the districts have documentation of intent to enroll in school outside Texas or in private school, but for whom transcript requests have not been received. Because the parents maintain authority over the children's education, the students are not counted as dropouts.
Students who withdraw with intent to enroll in other Texas public school districts.	These are students for whom the districts have documentation of intent to enroll in other Texas public school districts, but for whom transcript requests have not been received. Because the parents maintain authority over the children's education, the students are not counted as dropouts. With the leaver data collection, audits can be conducted to determine if the students did enroll in other districts.
Students who withdraw to enroll in approved alternative programs.	These are students for whom the districts have documentation of intent to attend alternative programs. The students are in compliance with compulsory attendance laws (at least 17 years old, or 16 years old for Job Corps programs) and are continuing to work toward completion of either high school diplomas or GED certificates. Therefore, they are not counted as dropouts.
Students under the age of compulsory attendance withdrawn from school by court order.	These students are ordered by a court of law to attend specific alternative programs. The districts do not have the authority to override such actions by the court; therefore, the students are not counted as dropouts. The districts must have copies of the court orders on file.
Students who withdraw to begin home schooling.	This is also a situation in which the parents or legal guardians maintain authority over the children's education. Further, the students are identified to the school districts as continuing courses of study without interruption. Consequently, the students are not counted as dropouts.

continues

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Table 9

Leavers Not Counted as Dropouts for Accountability Purposes by the Texas Education Agency (continued)

Reason for leaving	Rationale for not counting student as dropout
Withdrawn by district	
Students expelled.	TEC §37.007 (2001) defines circumstances in which districts are required or permitted to expel students, and TEC §39.051 (2001) excludes these students from the dropout count. Expelled students are not counted as dropouts during the term of expulsion. Also, those students whose adjudication indicates need for supervision and those convicted and sentenced are excluded from the dropout count.
Students who were administratively withdrawn when it was discovered that they were not residents or had falsified enrollment information.	The districts were not obligated to enroll these students in the first place. Therefore, the students' withdrawals are administrative corrections, and the districts are not held accountable for them as dropouts.
Students withdrawn from school after failing to provide immunization records.	With few exceptions, students enrolling in Texas public schools must be immunized against specified contagious diseases. Under Texas Department of Health rules, districts must provisionally admit students who have begun the required immunizations but may withdraw those who do not complete the immunizations within 30 days. The students are not voluntarily dropping out; therefore, they are not counted as such.
Other reasons	
Students who are in the protective custody of Child Protective Services (CPS) and have been forcibly removed by CPS, and the district has not been advised of the students' whereabouts.	This is an extreme situation in which an intervention was undertaken to protect a child's safety. The district does not have the authority to override such actions by CPS and cannot be held accountable for the child as a dropout.
Students who withdraw to enter health care facilities.	The assumption here is that the student's health was such that he or she was unable to remain in school. A student who enters a health care facility in Texas is provided education services by the facility or the district in which the facility is located, unless he or she is physically unable to continue secondary study. As such, the departure from school is not considered a voluntary interruption that the school could be expected to prevent or correct. Therefore, the student is not counted as a dropout for accountability purposes.
Students who have been incarcerated in facilities outside the boundaries of the school district.	These students become the responsibility of the districts where the facilities are located, which are obligated to see that educational services are made available. Hence, the students are more appropriately considered as transfers out of the district and are not counted as dropouts.
Students who withdraw from school to return to their home countries.	Due to the difficulty in tracking students who have left the country, districts are not required to confirm that these students have re-enrolled in school in order not to have them counted as dropouts. Districts must have documentation that the students are leaving or have left the country.
Students who had previously been counted as an official dropout in any year going back to 1991.	Research literature, as confirmed by input from educators participating in the commissioner's accountability focus groups, indicates that students who drop out but return to school are far more likely than their continuously enrolled peers to drop out again. To fully support districts in their efforts to recover students who have dropped out, repeat dropouts are only counted once as official dropouts.
Students who are deceased.	Self-explanatory.

Data Processing Refinements. Since the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) was first implemented in 1987, data processing refinements have helped TEA report student status information with increasing accuracy (see Table G-1 in Appendix G). Dropout records were the first individual student data records submitted as part of the PEIMS collection. In 1990-91, districts

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also began submitting individual student enrollment records. This allowed TEA to conduct an automated statewide search to determine if any students reported as dropouts were enrolled in other school districts in the state. In 1992-93, similar searches of attendance records, graduate records, and GED certificate records were also instituted. Although this effort does not constitute a change in the definition of a dropout, it does result in removing students from the dropout count who were incorrectly reported as dropouts by districts that were not aware the students had re-enrolled elsewhere. In 1998-99, the automated search of enrollment records was expanded to include students who return to school in the fall but leave before the PEIMS snapshot date or do not return until after the PEIMS snapshot date. (PEIMS data submitted in the fall represent a "snapshot" of the district on a selected date, usually the last Friday in October.)

Currently, a student reported to have dropped out of school is not counted as a dropout in the accountability system under the following circumstances:

- the student is found to have been enrolled in another Texas public school;
- the student is found to have graduated;
- the student is found to have received a GED;
- the student is found to have been ineligible for state Foundation School Program funding;
- the student is found to have been reported as a dropout from more than one district, and the data cannot confirm which district the student last attended; or
- the student is found to have been counted as a dropout in a previous school year.

In 2000-01, there were 5,600 students reported as dropouts whose records were excluded from the annual dropout rate computations (see Table 10). This was a decline from 10,312 in 1997-98.

Table 10
Counts of Reconciled Dropout Records, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

Reason for exclusion	Frequency	Percent
Graduated	81	1.5
Received a General Educational Development (GED) certificate	1,142	20.4
Moved to another district	3,334	59.5
Not eligible for Foundation School Program funding	96	1.7
Dropped out in a previous school year	840	15.0
Duplicate/questionable reporting	107	1.9
Total excluded	5,600	100.0

National Dropout Reporting

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), "the primary federal entity for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data related to education in the United States" (NCES, 2001, p. i), has been collecting and reporting state-by-state event dropout rates since the 1991-92 school year. NCES reports event dropout rates for states that submit data using consistent data definitions and collection procedures (NCES, 2001, p. 8). NCES requires that data definitions and collection procedures be consistent so that the rates can be compared across states.

Because the rates are comparable across states, participation in NCES dropout reporting provides a state with an external measure of the performance of its school system. Participation in successive years provides a measure of state progress in dropout prevention. A state may find, though, that a dropout definition developed to meet state reporting needs and the data collection procedures developed to support the state definition differ from the national definition and procedures. For example, in 1998-99, 48 states and the District of Columbia submitted dropout data to NCES, and NCES found the dropout data of 37 states and the District of Columbia to be in compliance for publication (NCES, 2001, p. 59).

In Texas, the annual dropout rate is an integral part of the public school accountability system. The dropout rate has features that are a direct result of its role as one of two base indicators in a high-stakes accountability system. The accountability dropout definition was developed with the advice of educators from across the state and represents their assessments of the definition most suitable to the accountability system of a large state with a diverse student population and a diversity of district types. The dropout data collected are one part of a comprehensive state public education data collection system and are subject to the procedures that govern the data collection system as a whole. These definitional and procedural differences, taken together, were such that NCES determined that Texas would need to recalculate dropout counts for publication by NCES.

A study conducted for the 76th Legislature by the Legislative Budget Board (LBB), State Auditor's Office (SAO), and TEA recommended that TEA prepare and submit data to NCES in compliance with the national dropout definition (LBB, 2000). The report noted that the NCES rate would not only be comparable to other state dropout rates but would also be an independent assessment of Texas progress on dropouts. Moreover, TEA has prepared and published an increasing variety of dropout statistics over the years.

To comply with the recommendation and avoid additional reporting requirements for the districts, the agency developed a method of calculating NCES dropout counts based on existing PEIMS data. The results for 1999-00 were submitted to NCES. NCES will publish 1999-00 state and district rates in late 2002. At that time, TEA will distribute the 1999-00 state and district NCES rates in the form of a data supplement to *Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 1999-00*, (TEA, 2001a). Likewise, the 2000-01 NCES rates will be published as a supplement to this report in late 2003.

Two sets of annual dropout rates using the state definition of a dropout are published by TEA: one for Grades 7-12 and one for Grades 9-12. The TEA Grade 7-12 annual dropout rate is a base indicator in the accountability system. Grade 7-12 annual dropout rates are published for all districts and campuses with any grade levels between Grade 7 and Grade 12, inclusive, and for the state. The rates appear in AEIS reports, School Report Cards, *Snapshot*, annual agency reports to the legislature, and annual high school completion and dropout reports.

The TEA Grade 9-12 annual dropout rate is published in the annual completion and dropout report for all districts with any grade levels between Grade 9 and Grade 12, inclusive, and for the state. NCES publishes Grade 9-12 state and district annual dropout rates, although states report Grade 7 and Grade 8 dropouts in their data submissions to NCES. To facilitate comparisons between the TEA Grade 9-12 annual dropout rates and the NCES annual dropout rates, the agency will continue its policy of publishing detailed descriptions of the dropout definitions, procedures, and calculations that apply to each rate.

The TEA annual dropout rate and the NCES annual dropout rate differ in several respects, including: the situations treated as high school completion; the situations when school leavers are considered to be continuing high school elsewhere; when dropouts are excluded from the dropout count; how duplicate, erroneous, and indeterminate records are handled; how summer dropouts are assigned to school years and grades; the conditions under which students are considered re-enrolled in the fall; and the denominator (see Table 11 on page 36).

The definition of a dropout used by NCES (2001, pp. 59-60) includes all individuals who were enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year, were not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, have not graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved education program, and who do not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:

- transferred to another public school district;
- transferred to a private school;
- transferred to a state- or district-approved education program;
- were temporarily absent due to suspension or enrollment in a school-approved education program; or
- died.

An individual is considered to have graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved education program, including special education and district- or state-sponsored GED preparation, upon receipt of formal recognition from school authorities.

There are five groups of students counted as dropouts by NCES that are not counted as dropouts by TEA:

- a student previously counted as a dropout;
- a student who withdraws to enroll in an approved adult education GED preparation program;

Table 11
"Dropouts" as Defined by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Texas Education Agency	National Center for Education Statistics
Definition TEA and NCES both define a dropout as a student who is enrolled in school at some time during the school year but either: leaves school during the school year without an approved excuse; or completes the school year and does not return the following year.	
Leavers not considered dropouts A student who leaves school for one of the following reasons is not considered a dropout by TEA or NCES: • graduates; • transfers to, or withdraws with intent to transfer to, a public or private school; • is being home schooled; • enrolls in college; or • dies;	
A student who leaves school for one of the following reasons is not considered a dropout by TEA: • receives a General Educational Development (GED) certificate by March 1 the following year; • enrolls in an approved adult education GED preparation program; or • meets all graduation requirements but does not pass the exit-level Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS).	A student who leaves school for one of the following reasons is not considered a dropout by NCES: • receives a GED certificate by the last Friday in October the following year.
Dropouts excluded from the dropout count Dropouts excluded from TEA counts include: • students who were previously counted as dropouts; • students who are not eligible for state funding; and • students who are reported as dropouts by more than one district and whose last district of attendance cannot be determined.	
Returning students Returning students are those who enroll at any time before the third week of January of the next school year.	Except for migrant students, returning students are those enrolled on the last Friday in October of the next school year.
Summer dropouts Summer dropouts are added to the counts of the school years and grade levels completed.	Summer dropouts are added to the counts of the school years and grade levels in which they fail to enroll.
Denominator Cumulative enrollment is used as the denominator in dropout rate calculations.	Fall enrollment is used as the denominator in dropout rate calculations.

- a senior who meets all graduation requirements but does not pass the exit-level TAAS;
- a student enrolled but not eligible for state Foundation School Program funding; and
- a dropout for whom the last district of attendance cannot be determined.

The largest numerical difference by far is attributable to the count of students who withdraw to enroll in approved adult education GED preparation programs. TEA treats these students as continuing their high school programs. NCES treats them as dropouts unless they obtain their GED certifications by the first day of school the following year.

The second largest numerical difference occurs because NCES and TEA set different conditions for considering students to have re-enrolled in the fall. For purposes of the NCES dropout count:

- the school year is the 12-month period of time from the first day of school; and
- an individual not accounted for on the first day of school is considered a dropout.

States are asked to report on an October through September reporting cycle. For many states on this reporting cycle, the first day of school is operationally set as October 1, but for TEA data submissions to NCES, the date is the last Friday in October. Except for migrant students, NCES considers only students enrolled effective the last Friday in October to have re-enrolled for the school year. TEA, on the other hand, considers all students enrolled at any time before mid- to late-January to have re-enrolled for the school year. Having a single day instead of five months for counting students as having returned to school makes a substantial difference in the NCES dropout counts. Similarly, TEA counts as GED recipients all students who received GED certificates before mid- to late-January of the next school year. NCES counts as GED recipients students who receive GED certificates before the last Friday in October of the next school year.

To calculate an annual dropout rate, NCES takes as the denominator the membership count for the state or district as of October 1 or, in the case of Texas, the last Friday in October. To calculate its annual dropout rate, TEA takes as the denominator the count of all students in attendance in the state or district at any time during the school year.

Finally, there are differences in the ways NCES and TEA attribute summer dropouts. NCES attributes a summer dropout to the count of the year and grade in which he or she fails to enroll. TEA, on the other hand, adds a summer dropout to the count of the year and grade level completed. This difference does not result in a large net difference between the two dropout totals, but must be taken into account when reconciling them. The difference in approach has a more significant effect on dropout counts by grade level. Relative to TEA counts, the NCES approach tends to "move" dropouts from Grade 11 to Grade 12, and from Grade 9 to Grade 10.

Statewide Dropout and Completion/Student Status Rates

Annual Dropout Rates

Calculation and Methods

The annual dropout rate is the number of students in Grades 7-12 who drop out during a school year, divided by cumulative enrollment that same year and multiplied by 100. Cumulative enrollment is the number of students in attendance in Grades 7-12 at any time during the school year.

Annual dropout rates for Grades 7-12 were calculated at the state, district, and campus levels. The annual dropout rate for Grades 9-12 was calculated at the state and district levels only. (See the data supplements to this report [TEA, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c] for listings of campus, district, and county rates. A supplement containing the National Center for Education Statistics 2000-01 dropout rates will be published in late 2003.) If a student attended more than one campus during the year, he or she was counted in attendance at each campus and in each district. When attendance and dropout data were aggregated to district, county, regional, and state levels, a student was counted only once at each level. For example, a student who attended two schools within a district was counted as in attendance once for each campus and once for the district. If the student dropped out, the student was counted as a dropout once for the district last attended and once for the campus in the district held accountable for the dropout.

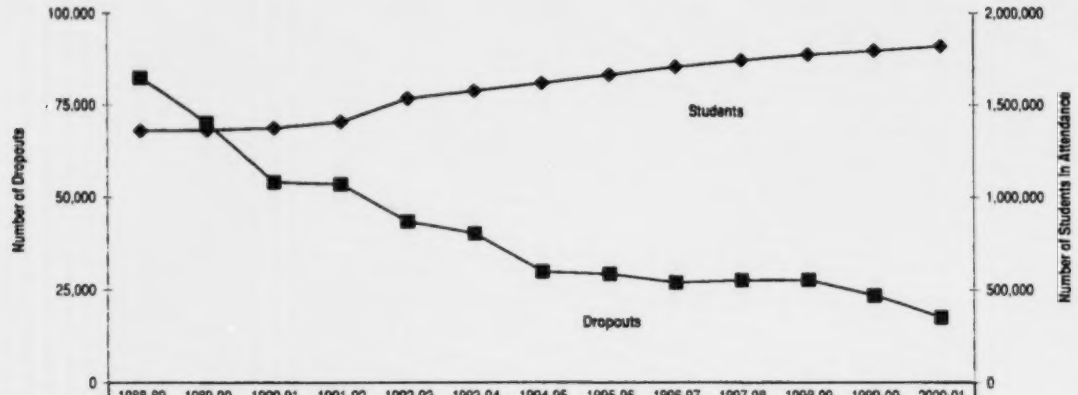
Grade 7-12 Annual Rate

State Rate. Out of 1,818,940 students enrolled in Grades 7-12 in Texas public schools during the 2000-01 school year, 17,563 students, or 1.0 percent, were reported to have dropped out (see Figures 6 and 7 on page 40). The number of students enrolled in Grades 7-12 increased by 24,419 (1.4%) over the number in 1999-00, while the number of dropouts decreased by 5,894 (25.1%). This was the largest decrease in the number of dropouts since 1994-95.

There was a decrease in the number of dropouts in all grades, but the most striking was in Grade 9, where the number of dropouts decreased 35.0 percent and the dropout rate fell from 2.0 percent to 1.3 percent. The number of dropouts in Grade 7 decreased by almost a quarter, but the dropout rate remained 0.2 percent.

Rates Among Student Groups. In 2000-01, dropout rates for African American and Hispanic students were well over twice as high as that for White students (see Figure 8 on page 41). As in previous years, males dropped out at a slightly higher rate than females. Students identified as economically disadvantaged had a dropout rate of 1.0 percent, the same as that for students not so identified.

Figure 6
Numbers of Students and Dropouts, Grades 7-12, Texas Public Schools, 1988-89 Through 2000-01

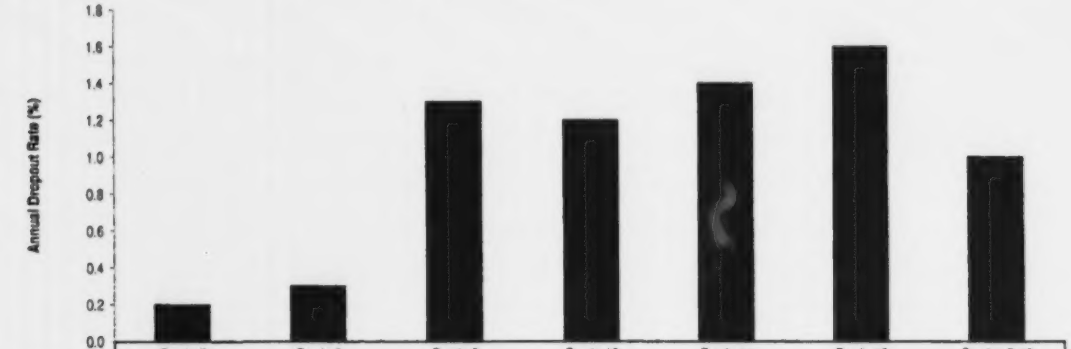


	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Dropouts	82,325	70,040	53,965	53,420	43,402	40,211	29,918	29,207	26,901	27,550	27,592	23,457	17,563
Students	1,360,115	1,361,494	1,372,738	1,406,838	1,533,197	1,576,015	1,617,522	1,662,578	1,705,972	1,743,139	1,773,117	1,794,521	1,818,940

School Year

Disaggregating dropout rates by student group and grade, the highest rate was for Hispanic students in Grade 12 (2.2%), and the lowest rates were for White, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American students in Grade 7 (0.1%) and White students in Grade 8 (0.1%). The dropout rates generally were much higher in Grades 9 through 12 than in Grades 7 and 8 (see Figure 9 on page 42). The highest dropout rates for all student groups appeared in Grade 12. The gaps between dropout rates for White students and those for Hispanic and African American students were greatest at Grade 9 and above. Hispanic and African American dropouts were much more likely to leave school across all grade levels than were White dropouts (see Table H-3 in Appendix H).

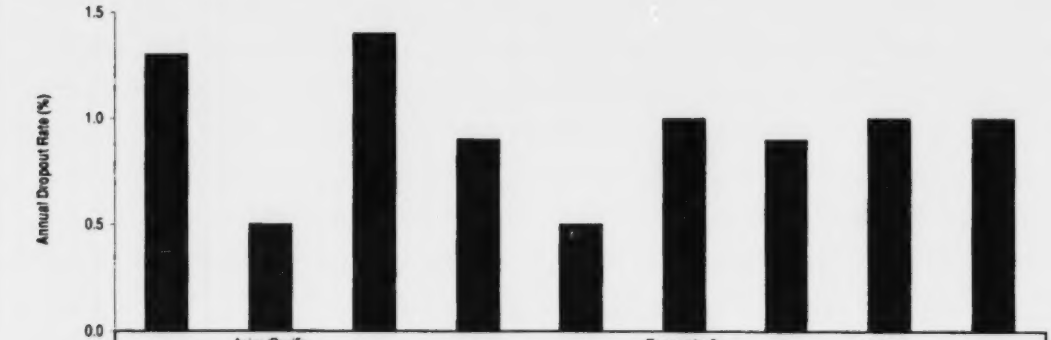
Figure 7
Annual Dropout Rate, by Grade, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01



	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Grades 7-12
Dropout Rate (%)	0.2	0.3	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.0
Dropouts	535	1,025	4,957	3,668	3,525	3,853	17,563
Students	321,799	316,889	383,656	302,088	253,569	240,939	1,818,940

Grade Level

Figure 8
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01



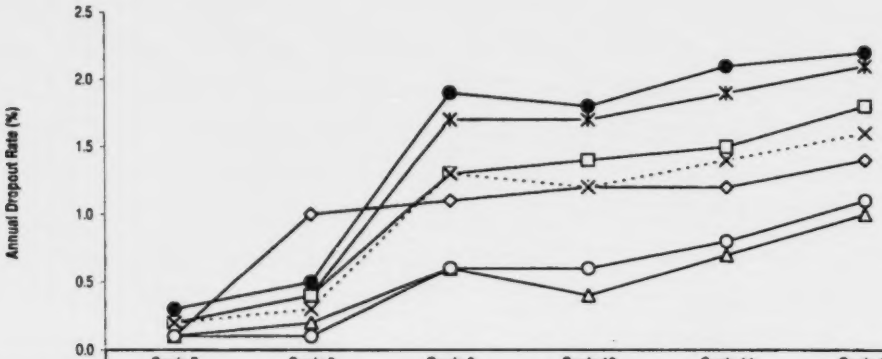
	African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Native American	White	Economically disadvantaged	Female	Male	State
Dropout Rate (%)	1.3	0.5	1.4	0.9	0.5	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0
Dropouts	3,288	255	9,489	49	4,482	6,534	7,829	9,734	17,563
Students	259,665	51,125	679,412	5,174	823,564	673,821	883,036	935,904	1,818,940

Student Group and State

Rates by Student Characteristics and Program Participation. An array of complex, often interrelated factors contribute to dropping out. Basic demographic characteristics, family and personal background, academic history, and characteristics of the school all may influence whether a student will stay in school. Tables H-4 through H-6 in Appendix H present dropout information by student age, special program participation (bilingual/English as a second language, gifted/talented, special education, Title I), and other educational factors (at risk, immigrant, limited English proficiency, migrant, overage).

Trends in Annual Rates. Since 1988-89, the Grade 7-12 annual dropout rate has gradually decreased (see Figure 10 on page 43). Since the late 1980's, there have been refinements in dropout reporting, data processing, and calculations. Also, the dropout rate became a base indicator in the accountability system in 1993-94. From 1996-97 through 1998-99, the state rate held steady at 1.6 percent, but in 1999-00, the rate decreased to 1.3 percent. The rate decreased for the second successive year to 1.0 percent in 2000-01. When the leaver record was introduced in 1997-98, the overall number of dropouts increased for the first time, but the rate remained constant. The number of dropouts rose only slightly in the second year of the leaver record collection. However, the number of dropouts decreased significantly in 1999-00 and continued to decrease even more in 2000-01, the second year the dropout standards for ratings had been raised since a dropout indicator was introduced (see Table H-7 in Appendix H).

Figure 9
Annual Dropout Rate, by Grade and Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01



	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
African American	0.2	0.4	1.7	1.7	1.9	2.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.1	0.2	0.6	0.4	0.7	1.0
Hispanic	0.3	0.5	1.9	1.8	2.1	2.2
Native American	0.1	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.4
White	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.6	0.8	1.1
Economically disadvantaged	0.2	0.4	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.8
State	0.2	0.3	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.6

Grade Level

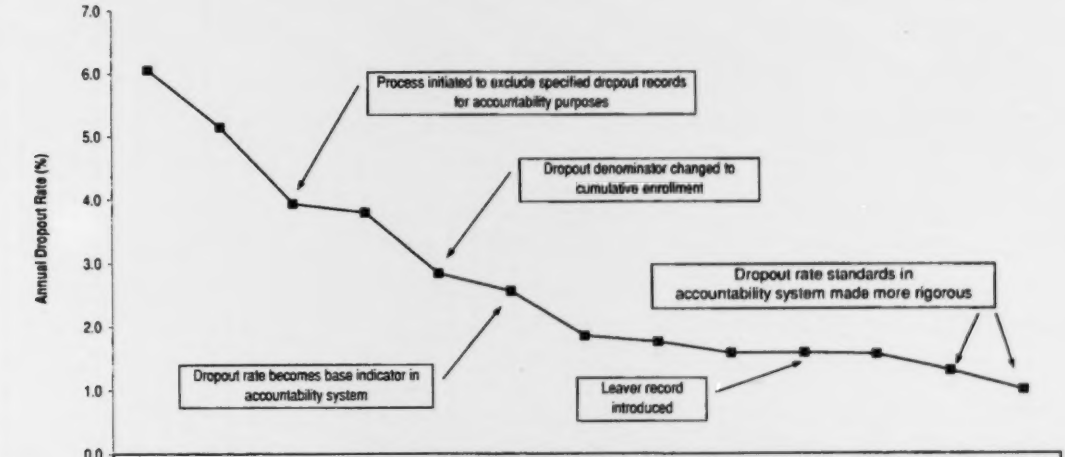
The number of dropouts declined in all student groups. The dropout rates for all student groups also declined (see Figure 11). The gaps between the dropout rate for White students and the dropout rates for African American and Hispanic students decreased by 0.3 percentage points. Still, a gap remains – the dropout rate for White students was 0.5 percent, compared to 1.3 percent for African American students and 1.4 percent for Hispanic students.

Grade 9-12 Annual Rate

Texas law requires that dropout rates be based on a span of Grades 7 through 12. Many organizations, including NCES, publish annual dropout rates based on a span of Grades 9 through 12. Adding two additional grade levels results in a greater number of dropouts reported for Grades 7-12 than that reported for Grades 9-12. But, because Grades 7 and 8 usually have fewer number of dropouts than the upper grades, annual rates that span Grades 7-12 are usually lower than rates that span Grades 9-12.

For the 2000-01 school year, the statewide annual dropout rate for Grades 9-12 was 1.4 percent (see Figure 12 on page 44), compared to the rate of 1.0 percent for Grades 7-12. There were 16,003 dropouts in Grades 9-12 in 2000-01, down 25.4 percent from 21,439 in 1999-00. The 2000-01 rate of 1.4 percent for Grades 9-12 was a decrease from the rate of 1.8 percent in 1999-00. Although using a grade span of 7-12, rather than 9-12, increased the number of dropouts by 1,560, or 9.7 percent, the dropout rate for Grades 7-12 did decrease by four tenths of a percentage point, compared to 1.4 percent for Grades 9-12. In both cases, the dropout rate decreased from the year before.

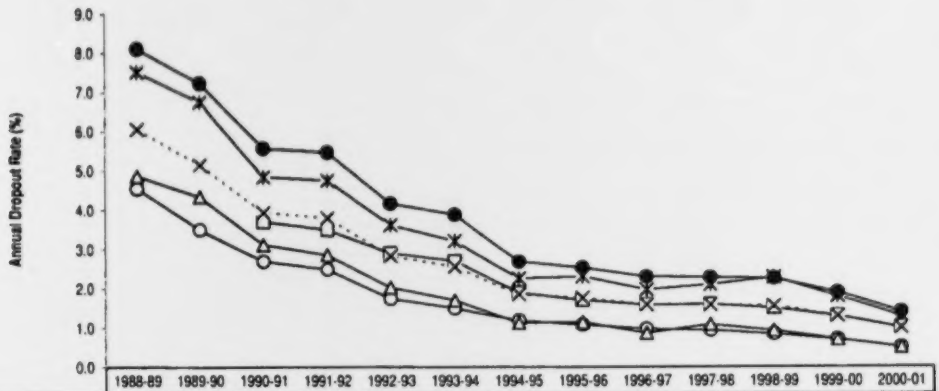
Figure 10
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, Texas Public Schools, 1988-89 Through 2000-01



	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Dropout Rate (%)	6.1	5.1	3.9	3.8	2.8	2.6	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.0
Dropouts	82,325	70,040	53,965	53,420	43,402	40,211	29,918	29,207	26,901	27,550	27,592	23,457	17,563

School Year

Figure 11
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 1988-89 Through 2000-01

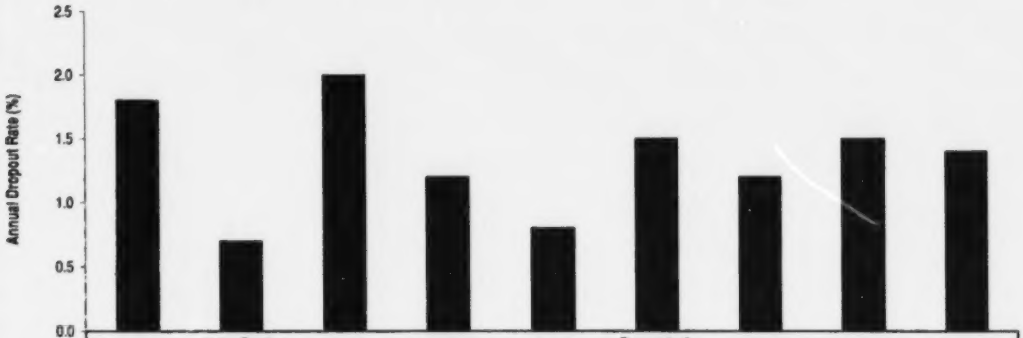


	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
African American	7.5	6.7	4.8	4.8	3.6	3.2	2.3	2.3	2.0	2.1	2.3	1.8	1.3
Hispanic	8.1	7.2	5.6	5.5	4.2	3.9	2.7	2.5	2.3	2.3	2.3	1.9	1.4
White	4.5	3.5	2.7	2.5	1.7	1.5	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.5
Other	4.9	4.3	3.1	2.9	2.0	1.7	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	0.5
Economically disadvantaged	n/a*	n/a	3.7	3.5	2.9	2.7	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.0
State	6.1	5.1	3.9	3.8	2.8	2.6	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.0

School Year

*Not available.

Figure 12
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 9-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01



	African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Native American	White	Economically disadvantaged	Female	Male	State
Dropout Rate (%)	1.8	0.7	2.0	1.2	0.8	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.4
Dropouts	3,022	231	8,517	39	4,194	5,729	7,012	8,991	16,003
Students	167,322	34,179	431,221	3,268	544,262	390,846	574,028	606,224	1,180,252

Student Group and State

To the extent that Grades 7 and 8 dropouts differ from dropouts in the higher grades, the picture presented of who drops out also differs. For example, in Grades 9-12, the dropout rates for males exceeded those for females (see Table H-2 in Appendix H). In addition, although the dropout rates for female and male students were the same in Grades 7 and 8, 10.4 percent of all female dropouts left from these two grades as compared to 7.6 percent of male dropouts. That is, female dropouts were more likely to leave school in Grades 7 and 8 than were males in the same grades.

As another example, Hispanic dropouts were somewhat more likely to leave school in Grades 7 and 8 than White and African American dropouts, so Hispanic students made up a slightly smaller share of Grade 9-12 dropouts than of Grade 7-12 dropouts. Even with these variations between the annual Grade 7-12 and Grade 9-12 dropout rates, the patterns in rates among major student groups and trends for these groups were similar in recent years (see Table H-7 and Table H-8 in Appendix H).

Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates

Introduction to the Rates

The Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data collection makes it possible to calculate longitudinal rates by tracking students individually as they progress through school. For the 1997-98 school year, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports included two longitudinal report-only indicators: (1) a six-year longitudinal dropout rate, covering Grades 7-12; and (2) a four-year longitudinal completion rate, covering Grades 9-12. In 1998-99, TEA combined the completion and dropout measures and used revised methods to produce a single

completion/student status series. The new series provides complementary rates for graduates, recipients of a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, students still enrolled, and dropouts, which together add to 100 percent.

Calculation and Methods

Conceptual Approach. The completion/student status rate is an adaptation of the Holding Power Index (HPI) (Hartzell, McKay, & Frymier, 1992). The HPI follows a class of students, or cohort, over a period of years, and determines the status of each student after the anticipated graduation date of the cohort.

The Cohorts. PEIMS attendance data are used to build each cohort of students for the completion/student status rate. Each cohort is identified by the starting grade and anticipated year of graduation. For example, members of the class of 2001 Grade 9 cohort were identified as students who attended Grade 9 for the first time in the 1997-98 school year. Cohort members were then tracked through the fall semester following their anticipated graduation date of spring 2001. This made it possible to identify those who continued in school after their class graduated. Members who transferred out of the Texas public school system during the time period covered were removed from the cohort. Students who transferred into the system on grade were added to the cohort.

Each student can belong to one and only one Grade 7 cohort and one and only one Grade 9 cohort. That is, cohort membership does not transfer from one cohort to another over time. Students who are retained in grade or who skip grades remain members of the cohort they first joined.

Any student for whom one of the designated outcomes could be determined was counted in the cohort. This included students who began Grade 7 or Grade 9 together, as well as students who transferred into Texas public schools. A student whose final status could not be determined was removed from the status counts. In the vast majority of cases, these were students who transferred out of the Texas public school system. In a small number of cases, students were excluded because of exceptions in the accountability system. The progress of the class of 2001 Grade 9 cohort through high school is illustrated in Appendix I.

Student Status. The completion/student status rate focuses on selected long-term student outcomes over a period of years. Each member of the cohort is assigned a final status by the year after anticipated graduation. Neither dropping out nor leaving necessarily determines the final status of a student. The status of a student who drops out or leaves will change if he or she returns and graduates, obtains a GED, or continues in school. Dropping out becomes the status of record only if it is the final status for a student in the PEIMS database.

Graduates. A student is classified as a graduate in the year in which he or she is reported in PEIMS as a graduate.

GED Recipients. GED tests are given at over 200 centers throughout the state in school districts, colleges and universities, and education service centers. Tests are given year-round and results

transmitted electronically to TEA. Receipt of a GED certificate is reported as soon as the test is scored as passing. A student in the class of 2001 was assigned a final status of GED if he or she received a certificate before March 1, 2002.

Continuing Enrollment. A student is classified as continuing if he or she is reported as enrolled in the state in the fall after his or her anticipated graduation.

Dropouts. A student is classified as a dropout if this is the final status recorded for the student in the PEIMS database.

Calculating the Rates. To determine completion/student status rates, the number of students in each status category (graduation, GED, school continuation, and dropout) is divided by the total number of students in the cohort. Because the total number of students in the cohort is used to calculate each rate, the sum of the four rates is always 100 percent.

Results

State Rates. Table 12 shows the completion/student status rates for Grade 7 and Grade 9 cohorts for the classes of 2000 and 2001. Out of 249,161 students in the class of 2001 Grade 9 cohort, 85.9 percent either graduated or received a GED certificate by 2001. An additional 7.9 percent continued school the following school year.

Table 12
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status, Grades 9-12 and 7-12, Texas Public Schools, Classes of 2000 and 2001

		Graduated		Received GED[a]		Continued		Dropped out	
Group	Number	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Grade 9 cohort									
Class of 2000	244,777	197,579	80.7	11,648	4.8	17,821	7.3	17,729	7.2
Class of 2001	249,161	202,052	81.1	11,978	4.8	19,580	7.9	15,551	6.2
Grade 7 cohort									
Class of 2000	245,919	195,590	79.5	11,445	4.7	19,880	8.1	19,004	7.7
Class of 2001	251,408	200,716	79.8	11,808	4.7	21,797	8.7	17,087	6.8

[a]General Educational Development certificate.

There were 15,551 dropouts from this class, making up 6.2 percent of the cohort with final statuses. This was a 1.0 percentage point decrease from the 7.2 percent longitudinal dropout rate for the class of 2000 Grade 9 cohort. The number of dropouts declined 12.3 percent, even though the number of students in the cohort increased 1.8 percent. Although the annual dropout rate and the longitudinal rate are quite different measures of school system performance, the dramatic decline in dropouts in Texas public schools in the 2000-01 school year was reflected in both. Appendix J provides an illustration of the relationship between annual and longitudinal dropout counts.

The Grade 7 cohorts demonstrated similar patterns. Between 2000 and 2001, the graduation rate increased from 79.5 percent to 79.8 percent, while the GED rate remained the same (4.7 percent). As with the Grade 9 cohort, the rate of dropping out decreased, and the rate of continuation increased. The dropout rate for the class of 2001 Grade 7 cohort was 6.8 percent.

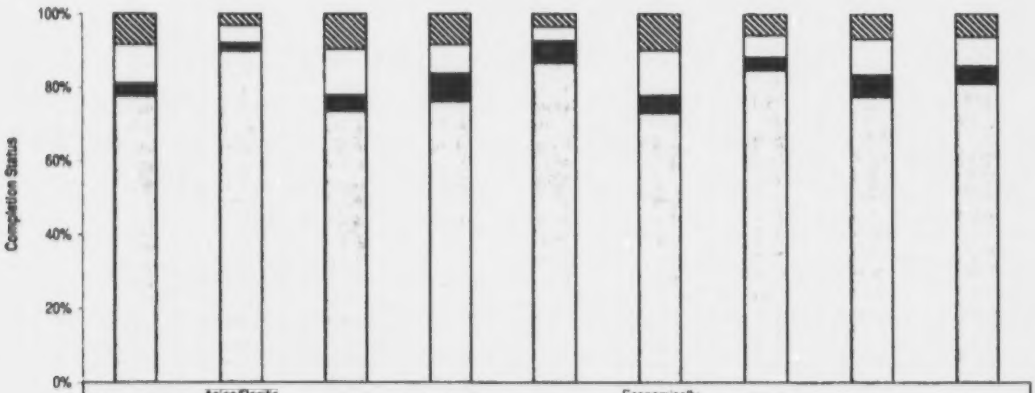
The Grade 7-12 and Grade 9-12 annual dropout rates differ from one another much more than do the Grade 7 and Grade 9 longitudinal dropout rates. For example, the Grade 9-12 annual dropout rate of 1.4 percent is 40 percent greater than the Grade 7-12 annual dropout rate of 1.0 percent. The Grade 7 longitudinal dropout rate (6.8%) is only 8.8 percent larger than the Grade 9 longitudinal dropout rate (6.2%). This is primarily because of differences in the total number of students taken into account in the calculation, rather than differences in the actual number of dropouts. The Grade 7-12 annual dropout rate is based on the total number of students in six grade levels, and the Grade 9-12 annual dropout rate is based on the total number of students in four grade levels. In contrast, both of the longitudinal rates are based on the number of students in only one grade level — either Grade 7 or Grade 9; consequently, the rates are not so different from one another.

As mentioned earlier, Grade 7-12 annual dropout rates tend to be notably lower than Grade 9-12 annual rates. This is because Grades 7 and 8 contribute a relatively small number of students to the dropout count, but a relatively large number of students to the overall population considered. Longitudinal dropout rates, on the other hand, show a different pattern — Grade 7 rates are slightly higher than Grade 9 rates. Although the Grade 7 start does add a relatively small number of students to the cumulative dropout count, the difference in the sizes of the Grade 7 and Grade 9 cohorts is also small.

Rates Among Student Groups. Completion/student status rates demonstrate that secondary-school experiences varied considerably by student group (see Figure 13 on page 48). For example, in the Grade 9 cohort for the class of 2001, White students as a group had a graduation rate of 86.8 percent, whereas African American students and Hispanic students had graduation rates of 77.7 percent and 73.5 percent, respectively. Hispanic students and economically disadvantaged students had the highest longitudinal dropout rates at 9.6 percent and 9.9 percent, respectively. Hispanics were most likely among the student groups to be continuing school in the fall after anticipated graduation. Native Americans had the largest percentage of students receiving GED certificates (7.5%). Females had a higher graduation rate (84.7%) than males (77.5%) and lower rates of GED certification, continuation, and dropping out.

Except for Native American students in the Grade 9 cohort, the graduation rates for all student groups improved and dropout rates decreased for all groups between 2000 and 2001. Asian/Pacific Islanders and White student groups had the highest graduation rates whether Grade 9 (see Figure 13 on page 48) or Grade 7 (see Figure 14 on page 48) cohorts were tracked. Hispanics had the highest continuation rates based on both Grade 9 and Grade 7 cohorts. Students who were economically disadvantaged had the highest dropout rates in both the Grade 9 and Grade 7 cohorts.

Figure 13
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates, Grades 9-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, Class of 2001

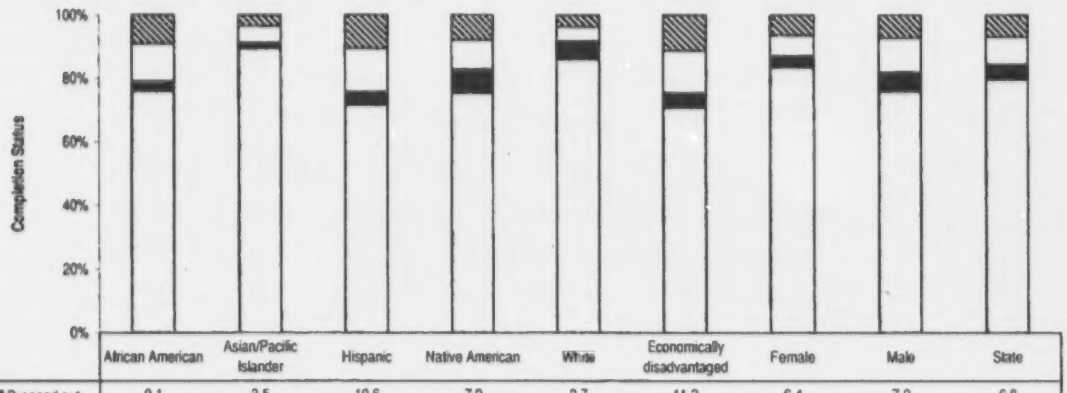


	African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Native American	White	Economically disadvantaged	Female	Male	State
Dropped out	8.4	3.1	9.6	8.4	3.5	9.9	5.7	6.8	6.2
Continued	10.6	4.9	12.6	7.8	3.9	12.3	6.0	9.7	7.9
Received GED[a]	3.3	2.0	4.3	7.5	5.8	4.6	3.6	6.0	4.8
Graduated	77.7	90.0	73.5	76.4	86.8	73.2	84.7	77.5	81.1

Student Group, Gender, and State

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.
[a]General Educational Development certificate.

Figure 14
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, Class of 2001



	African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Native American	White	Economically disadvantaged	Female	Male	State
Dropped out	9.1	3.5	10.6	7.9	3.7	11.2	6.4	7.2	6.8
Continued	11.8	5.2	13.6	9.1	4.5	13.3	6.5	10.8	8.7
Received GED[a]	3.1	1.9	4.1	7.5	5.7	4.6	3.5	5.9	4.7
Graduated	76.1	89.4	71.7	75.4	86.1	70.9	83.6	76.1	79.8

Student Group, Gender, and State

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.
[a]General Educational Development certificate.

Rates by Student Characteristics and Program Participation. In addition to basic demographic groups, completion/student status rates were calculated for students with limited English proficiency and at-risk students, and for students participating in career and technology education, special education, and gifted/talented programs. Table H-9 in Appendix H shows the rates for these students in the class of 2001 Grade 9 cohort.

Students Completing High School in More Than Four Years. Many students took longer than four years to finish their high school education. For example, the group of students who began ninth grade for the first time in 1994-95 was followed through their expected graduation year in 1998. At that time, 78.7 percent of the class of 1998 had graduated, 4.3 percent had received a GED, 8.2 percent were still in high school, and 8.9 percent had dropped out (Table 13).

Table 13
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates for Class of 1998, as of Fall 1998

Number in cohort	Graduated		Received GED[a]		Continued		Dropped out	
	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
228,049	179,379	78.7	9,699	4.3	18,745	8.2	20,226	8.9

[a]General Educational Development certificate.

In 2001, three years after expected graduation and seven years after the students began Grade 9 in 1994-95, more had graduated (83.8%) or received a GED (6.0%). Because some of those who were continuing high school in 1998 had transferred out and not graduated, received a GED or dropped out by 2001, the total number with a final status decreased from 228,049 in 1998 to 227,072 in 2001 (Table 14).

Table 14
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates for Students Who Began Grade 9 in 1994-95, as of Fall 2001

Number in cohort	Graduated		Received GED[a]		Continued		Dropped out	
	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
227,072	190,359	83.8	13,513	6.0	340	0.1	22,860	10.1

[a]General Educational Development certificate.

Attrition Rates

An attrition rate is the percentage change in enrollment between two grades. It provides a simple measure of school leavers when aggregate enrollment numbers are the only data available. For Grades 9-12, the rate is calculated by subtracting Grade 12 enrollment from Grade 9 enrollment four years earlier, and dividing by the Grade 9 enrollment.

The attrition rate does not take into account any of the reasons the beginning and ending enrollments are different. Therefore, there is no way to distinguish attrition that results from dropping out of school from attrition resulting from grade-level retention, students transferring to private schools, death, or early graduation. Grade 9-12 and Grade 7-12 attrition rates for 2001 are presented in Table 15 and Table 16, respectively. The rates were not adjusted for growth in student enrollment over the time period covered.

Table 15
Enrollment and Attrition Rate, Grades 9-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 2001

	Enrollment			
Group	Grade 9, 1997-98	Grade 12, 2000-01	Change	Attrition rate (%)
African American	51,582	29,177	22,405	43.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	8,106	7,352	754	9.3
Hispanic	135,437	71,431	64,006	47.3
Native American	866	583	283	32.7
White	152,102	111,781	40,321	26.5
Economically disadvantaged	143,396	61,762	81,634	56.9
State	348,093	220,324	127,769	36.7

Note. Enrollment includes unmatched student identification records.

Table 16
Enrollment and Attrition Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 2001

	Enrollment			
Group	Grade 7, 1995-96	Grade 12, 2000-01	Change	Attrition rate (%)
African American	40,896	29,177	11,719	28.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	6,569	7,352	-783	-11.9
Hispanic	105,531	71,431	34,100	32.3
Native American	713	583	130	18.2
White	138,481	111,781	26,700	19.3
Economically disadvantaged	132,982	61,762	71,220	53.6
State	292,190	220,324	71,866	24.6

Note. Enrollment includes unmatched student identification records.

Reasons for Dropping Out and the State Plan to Reduce the Dropout Rate

Dropout Reasons

Districts can provide up to 3 out of 18 exit reasons for a student who drops out, or indicate that the reason the student left was unknown or not provided. Out of 17,563 dropouts in Grades 7-12 in 2000-01, the reason for leaving school was reported as unknown for 45.4 percent (see Table 17 on page 52). For 20.0 percent of dropouts, poor attendance was reported as the reason for dropping out.

Goals of the 2001-2005 State Plan to Reduce the Dropout Rate

Texas Education Agency (TEA) is developing a measurable state plan to reduce the dropout rate, as required by Texas Education Code (TEC) §39.182, 2001. The plan is based on the public education objective that "[t]hrough enhanced dropout prevention efforts, all students will remain in school until they obtain a high school diploma" (TEC §4.001(b), 2001). *The 2001-2005 State Plan to Reduce the Dropout Rate* contains seven goals that form the core of the statewide effort to reduce the dropout rate. *The 2001-2005 State Plan to Reduce the Dropout Rate* has been developed to guide school districts and education service centers in their efforts for dropout prevention and dropout recovery activities and programs. The goals are:

- **Adopt High Expectations.** Implement dropout prevention and dropout recovery efforts that are predicated on the fundamental premise that all students can learn and succeed in school. In order to establish and maintain the high expectation that all students can learn, program efforts must include commitment to the accurate assessment of student needs, adaptive instructional methodologies, and system accountability.
- **Strive for Teacher and Administrator Renewal.** Build upon professional development and recruitment efforts to train teachers and administrators in the public education system to more effectively reach all students. Recruit new, especially minority, teachers and administrators in areas, e.g., grade levels and geographic, with the highest incidences of dropouts.
- **Eliminate Obstacles to Student Success.** Revise or eliminate educational policies and practices that stand as barriers to student success, at every level, e.g., classroom, campus, and district.
- **Adapt Organizational Structure.** Establish an organizational structure in the public schools that provides a learning continuum from year-to-year, grade-to-grade, and campus-to-campus. This learning continuum should address the diverse academic, social, and special needs of the students, adapting configurations of place, time, and personnel to promote student success.

Table 17
Exit Reasons Reported for Official Dropouts, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

			Gender (%)		Group (%)					
Reason	Number	Percent	Female	Male	African Am.	Asian/ Pac. Is.	Hisp.	Native Am.	White	Econ. Disadv.
Because of poor attendance	3,514	20.0	20.4	19.7	21.4	12.6	17.9	20.4	23.9	16.5
To pursue a job	1,484	8.5	5.4	10.9	5.5	5.1	11.0	4.1	5.4	8.0
Enrollment revoked due to absences	870	5.0	4.4	5.4	5.6	4.7	4.3	2.0	5.9	3.7
Because of age	849	4.8	4.1	5.5	6.3	8.2	4.9	4.1	3.4	5.2
To enter an alternative education program that has no degree program	731	4.2	3.7	4.6	4.0	3.1	3.4	2.0	6.0	3.3
To enter an alternative education program (but not in compliance with compulsory attendance)	622	3.5	3.3	3.7	2.3	2.8	2.9	4.1	5.8	2.9
To get married	394	2.2	4.1	0.8	0.1	0.8	3.5	2.0	1.2	3.2
Because of pregnancy	330	1.9	4.2	<0.1	1.7	0.8	2.3	0.0	1.2	2.3
Because of low grades	250	1.4	1.2	1.6	1.2	2.0	1.4	4.1	1.5	1.9
Because of failing the exit Texas Assessment of Academic Skills	153	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.4	1.6	0.9	0.0	0.3	1.5
Expelled for reasons other than criminal behavior	143	0.8	0.5	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.0	1.0	0.8
Because of homelessness	107	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.5	6.1	1.0	0.7
To join the military	42	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.1
Expelled and had not returned	23	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2
Did not return after a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program assignment	21	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	<0.1	0.1
To enter college, but not a degree program	19	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1
Because of drug abuse	19	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1
Because of language problems	10	0.1	<0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	<0.1	0.1
No reason provided	7,982	45.5	46.3	44.7	48.2	56.5	45.7	51.0	42.3	49.5
State	17,563	100	7,829	9,734	3,288	255	9,489	49	4,482	6,534

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

- **Provide Appropriate Assessment and Instructional Strategies.** Assess student progress on an on-going basis to obtain appropriate feedback for needed modification of methods and pacing of instruction. Assessment should rely on multiple measures/data sources that yield critical feedback regarding the many dimensions of students' intellectual abilities and linguistic proficiency. Instruction should be directed to the different learning styles of students.

- **Establish Stakeholder Partnerships.** Foster public school alliances with parents, community-based organizations, and businesses to minimize external barriers to student success. By forming collaborative partnerships, schools increase the potential for human and financial resources to enhance program offerings. The use of school sites and facilities can increase overall system efficiency that can lead to renewed dedication and concentrated effort by the community-at-large to reduce the dropout rate.
- **Identify and Support Statewide Best Practices.** Implement a coordinated effort between TEA, the education service center network, and school districts to identify and implement best practices in dropout prevention and dropout recovery efforts.

The plan will be reported to the legislature in the *2002 Comprehensive Annual Report on Texas Public Schools*, as required by TEC §39.182, 2001.

Appendix A
Availability and Reporting of Leaver Reason Codes

Table A-1
Leaver Reason Codes, Texas Public Schools, 1997-98 Through 2000-01

Code[a]	Leaver reason	Code available[b]			
		1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Completed high school program					
01*	Graduated	•	•	•	•
19*	Completed graduation requirements except passing exit-level TAAS[c]	•	•	•	•
31*	Completed GED[d]	•	•	•	•
63*	Graduated previously, returned to school, left again	•	•	•	•
64*	Completed GED previously, returned to school, left again	•	•	•	•
Moved to other educational setting					
28*	Intent to enroll in a public school in Texas	•	•	•	•
29*	Intent to enroll in a private school in Texas	•	•	•	•
05*	No intent but documented enrollment in a public or private school in Texas	•			
73*	No intent but documented enrollment in a public school in Texas		•	•	•
74*	No intent but documented enrollment in a private school in Texas		•	•	•
07*	Intent to enroll in school out of state	•	•	•	•
06*	No intent but documented enrollment in school out of state	•	•	•	•
21*	Official transfer to another Texas public school district	•	m	m	•
22*	Alternative program working toward GED or diploma	•	m	•	•
72*	Alternative program by court order		•	•	•
23	Alternative program not in compliance with compulsory attendance and not working toward GED or diploma	•			
70	Alternative program not in compliance with compulsory attendance		•	•	•
71	Alternative program not working toward GED or diploma		•	•	•
60*	Withdrew for home schooling	•	•	•	•
24*	Entered college early to pursue degree	•	•	•	•
25	Entered college but did not pursue degree	•	•	•	•
Withdrawn by district					
76	Enrollment revoked due to absences			•	•
17*	Expelled for criminal behavior	•	•		
78*	Expelled for criminal behavior and could not return			•	•
79	Expelled for criminal behavior and could return but had not			•	•
26	Expelled for reasons other than criminal behavior	•	•	•	•
62*	Withdrawn for non-residence or falsified enrollment information	•	•	•	•
67*	Withdrawn for failure to provide immunization records		•	•	•
Other reasons – school related					
11	Withdrew/left school because of low or failing grades	•	•	•	•
12	Withdrew/left school because of poor attendance	•	•	m	•
13	Withdrew/left school because of language problems	•	•	•	•
27	Withdrew/left school because of TAAS failure	•	•	•	•
14	Withdrew/left school because of age	•	•	•	•
Other reasons – job related					
02	Withdrew/left school to pursue a job	•	•	•	•
04	Withdrew/left school to join the military	•	•	•	•

[a]Codes with an asterisk (*) are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes. [b]"m" indicates that the wording of the code was modified slightly from the previous year. [c]Texas Assessment of Academic Skills. [d]General Educational Development certificate. [e]Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.

continues

Table A-1
Leaver Reason Codes, Texas Public Schools, 1997-98 Through 2000-01 (continued)

Code[a]	Leaver reason	Code available[b]			
		1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Other reasons – family related					
08	Withdrew/left school because of pregnancy	•	•	•	•
09	Withdrew/left school because of marriage	•	•	•	•
15	Withdrew/left school due to homelessness/non-permanent residency	•	•	•	•
66*	Removed from the district by Child Protective Services	•	m	•	•
Other reasons					
03*	Deceased	•	•	•	•
10	Withdrew/left school due to alcohol or other drug abuse problem	•	•	•	•
16*	Returned to home country	•	•	•	•
30*	Withdrew/left school to enter a health care facility	•	•	•	•
61*	Incarcerated in a facility outside the boundaries of the district	•	•	•	•
65	Did not return to school after completing a JJAEP[e] term	•	•	•	•
99	Other (unknown or not listed)	•	•	•	•

[a]Codes with an asterisk (*) are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes. [b]"m" indicates that the wording of the code was modified slightly from the previous year. [c]Texas Assessment of Academic Skills. [d]General Educational Development certificate. [e]Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.

Table A-2
Leaver Reasons Reported, Texas Public Schools, 1997-98 Through 2000-01

Code[a]	Leaver reason	Number of records[b]			
		1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Completed high school program					
01*	Graduated	197,186	203,393	212,925	215,316
19*	Completed graduation requirements except passing exit-level TAAS[c]	2,629	2,307	1,809	1,774
31*	Completed GED[d]	6,801	7,943	7,338	7,225
63*	Graduated previously, returned to school, left again	64	83	94	60
64*	Completed GED previously, returned to school, left again	843	572	627	348
Moved to other educational setting					
28*	Intent to enroll in a public school in Texas	108,658	129,902	132,596	133,843
29*	Intent to enroll in a private school in Texas	6,896	7,815	8,501	8,357
05*	No intent but documented enrollment in a public or private school in Texas	26,777	—	—	—
73*	No intent but documented enrollment in a public school in Texas	—	19,543	18,650	25,544
74*	No intent but documented enrollment in a private school in Texas	—	868	1,080	1,497
07*	Intent to enroll in school out of state	29,597	34,807	35,039	33,450
06*	No intent but documented enrollment in school out of state	6,756	6,110	7,375	5,677
21*	Official transfer to another Texas public school district	5,812	6,471	4,643	5,161
22*	Alternative program working toward GED or diploma	17,851	19,772	21,011	21,703
72*	Alternative program by court order	—	281	1,387	2,179
23	Alternative program not in compliance with compulsory attendance and not working toward GED or diploma	3,103	—	—	—
70	Alternative program not in compliance with compulsory attendance	—	1,500	1,166	787
71	Alternative program not working toward GED or diploma	—	1,092	1,342	967
60*	Withdrew for home schooling	8,632	11,086	12,721	13,676
24*	Entered college early to pursue degree	332	441	297	233
25	Entered college but did not pursue degree	36	28	40	49
Withdrawn by district					
76	Enrollment revoked due to absences	—	—	688	1,061
17*	Expelled for criminal behavior	668	520	—	—
78*	Expelled for criminal behavior and could not return	—	—	248	358
79	Expelled for criminal behavior and could return but had not	—	—	31	36
26	Expelled for reasons other than criminal behavior	497	395	350	271
62*	Withdrawn for non-residence or falsified enrollment information	683	1,553	1,699	1,488
67*	Withdrawn for failure to provide immunization records	—	9	87	74
Other reasons – school related					
11	Withdrew/left school because of low or failing grades	515	474	377	309
12	Withdrew/left school because of poor attendance	9,007	8,310	7,389	4,554
13	Withdrew/left school because of language problems	11	14	7	10
27	Withdrew/left school because of TAAS failure	270	350	233	181
14	Withdrew/left school because of age	1,124	2,222	1,193	1,076
Other reasons – job related					
02	Withdrew/left school to pursue a job	2,124	2,773	2,012	1,766
04	Withdrew/left school to join the military	79	89	70	60

Note. Some records report more than one reason. All reasons reported are included in these totals.

[a]Codes with an asterisk (*) are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes. [b](—) indicates code was not available (see Table A-1 for details). [c]Texas Assessment of Academic Skills. [d]General Educational Development certificate. [e]Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.

continues

Table A-2
Leaver Reasons Reported, Texas Public Schools, 1997-98 Through 2000-01 (continued)

Code[a]	Leaver reason	Number of records[b]			
		1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Other reasons – family related					
08	Withdrew/left school because of pregnancy	560	615	475	415
09	Withdrew/left school because of marriage	799	707	496	443
15	Withdrew/left school due to homelessness/non-permanent residency	131	250	217	175
66*	Removed from the district by Child Protective Services	395	722	988	1,059
Other reasons					
03*	Deceased	795	727	776	783
10	Withdrew/left school due to alcohol or other drug abuse problem	54	67	47	39
16*	Returned to home country	7,515	9,876	10,676	11,501
30*	Withdrew/left school to enter a health care facility	776	1,210	1,447	1,423
61*	Incarcerated in a facility outside the boundaries of the district	5,329	5,163	5,802	6,002
65	Did not return to school after completing a JJAEP[e] term	96	127	110	58
99	Other (unknown or not listed)	19,809	18,193	15,256	11,085

Note. Some records report more than one reason. All reasons reported are included in these totals.

[a]Codes with an asterisk (*) are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes. [b](—) indicates code was not available (see Table A-1 for details). [c]Texas Assessment of Academic Skills. [d]General Educational Development certificate. [e]Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.

Appendix B
Record Exclusions and Exit Reasons for Reported Leavers

Table B-1
Reported Leaver Records Reconciled During Leaver Processing, Texas Public Schools, 1997-98 Through 2000-01

Reported leavers and reconciliation reasons	1997-98		1998-99		1999-00		2000-01	
	Number[a]	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Reported graduates	197,186	41.7	203,393	40.1	212,925	41.1	215,316	41.3
Reconciled leaver and dropout records								
Reason for record reconciliation								
Found in enrollment or attendance	101,096	21.4	134,905	26.6	138,381	26.7	149,564	28.7
GED[b] certificate	14,140	3.0	17,062	3.4	19,511	3.8	19,066	3.7
Graduate	1,339	0.3	1,988	0.4	3,738	0.7	4,126	0.8
Previous dropout	1,954	0.4	1,608	0.3	1,333	0.3	840	0.2
ADA[c] ineligible	508	0.1	459	0.1	318	0.1	365	0.1
Duplicate or questionable record	14,050	3.0	2,263	0.4	2,103	0.4	1,848	0.4
Qualified leaver reason (through 1997-98 only)	205	<0.1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Records reconciled	133,292	28.2	158,285	31.2	165,384	31.9	175,809	33.7
Official other leavers	114,421	24.2	118,488	23.3	116,644	22.5	112,986	21.7
Official dropouts	27,550	5.8	27,592	5.4	23,457	4.5	17,563	3.4
All reported leavers	472,449	100	507,758	100	518,410	100	521,674	100

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

[a](—) Indicates code was not available (see Table A-1 for details). [b]General Educational Development. [c]Average Daily Attendance.

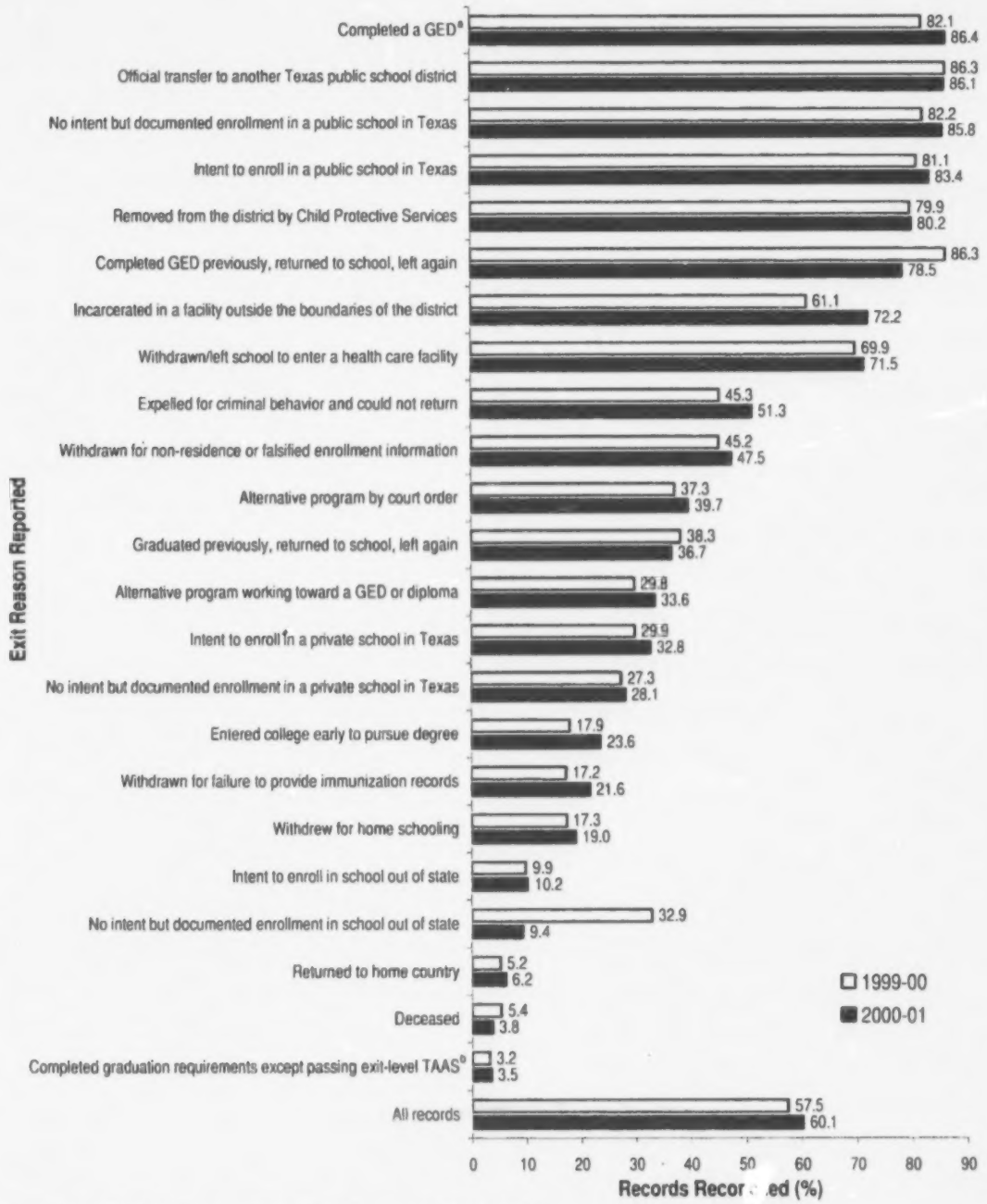
Table B-2
Exit Reasons for Official Leavers, Texas Public Schools, 1997-98 Through 2000-01

Exit reason	1997-98		1998-99		1999-00		2000-01	
	Number[a]	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Intent to enroll in school out of state	26,140	5.5	31,159	6.1	31,553	6.1	30,029	5.8
Intent to enroll in a public school in Texas	30,923	6.6	27,150	5.4	25,099	4.8	22,213	4.3
Alternative program working toward GED[b] or diploma	12,476	2.6	14,343	2.8	14,740	2.8	14,410	2.8
No intent but documented enrollment in a public or private school in Texas	8,564	1.8	—	—	—	—	—	—
Withdrew for home schooling	6,994	1.5	9,263	1.8	10,515	2.0	11,062	2.1
Returned to home country	6,878	1.5	9,392	1.9	10,114	2.0	10,783	2.1
Intent to enroll in a private school in Texas	5,497	1.2	5,988	1.2	5,901	1.1	5,613	1.1
No intent but documented enrollment in school out of state	5,805	1.2	5,416	1.1	4,942	1.0	5,118	1.0
No intent but documented enrollment in a public school in Texas	—	—	4,459	0.9	3,309	0.6	3,621	0.7
Completed graduation requirements except passing exit-level TAAS[c]	2,519	0.5	2,238	0.4	1,748	0.3	1,712	0.3
Incarcerated in a facility outside the boundaries of the district	2,739	0.6	2,460	0.5	2,253	0.4	1,669	0.3
Alternative program by court order	—	—	168	<0.1	863	0.2	1,313	0.3
No intent but documented enrollment in a private school in Texas	—	—	715	0.1	780	0.2	1,074	0.2
Completed GED	1,753	0.4	1,539	0.3	1,304	0.3	980	0.2
Withdrawn for non-residence or falsified enrollment information	382	0.1	860	0.2	931	0.2	782	0.2
Deceased	727	0.2	697	0.1	733	0.1	753	0.1
Official transfer to another Texas public school district	1,386	0.3	1,190	0.2	637	0.1	718	0.1
Withdrew/left school to enter a health care facility	383	0.1	435	0.1	435	0.1	404	0.1
Removed from the district by Child Protective Services	131	<0.1	153	<0.1	197	<0.1	210	<0.1
Entered college early to pursue degree	267	0.1	366	0.1	242	0.1	178	<0.1
Expelled for criminal behavior and could not return	—	—	—	—	133	<0.1	173	<0.1
Completed GED previously, returned to school, left again	405	0.1	118	<0.1	86	<0.1	75	<0.1
Expelled for criminal behavior	394	0.1	313	0.1	—	—	—	—
Withdrawn for failure to provide immunization records	—	—	6	<0.1	71	<0.1	58	<0.1
Graduated previously, returned to school, left again	58	<0.1	60	<0.1	58	<0.1	38	<0.1
All official other leavers	114,421	24.2	118,488	23.3	116,644	22.5	112,986	21.7

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

[a](—) Indicates code was not available (see Table A-1 for details). [b]General Educational Development certificate. [c]Texas Assessment of Academic Skills.

Figure B-1
Reported Leaver Records Reconciled, by Exit Reason, Texas Public Schools, 1999-00 and 2000-01



[a]General Educational Development certificate. [b]Texas Assessment of Academic Skills.

Reported leaver records were reconciled if matches were found in graduate, GED recipient, attendance, or enrollment files. In addition, a small number of records were excluded because of funding ineligibility or duplicate reporting.

Appendix C
Leaver Reason Codes and Documentation Requirements in the Public Education Information Management System

Appendix C
Leaver Reason Codes and Documentation Requirements in the Public Education Information Management System

Introduction

Table C-1 on pages 69-76 provides an expanded definition and specific guidelines on acceptable documentation for each of the leaver reason codes listed in Code Table C162 of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) *2001-2002 Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Data Standards* (TEA, 2001c). The table is organized into the following broad categories of leavers:

- Completed High School Program
- Moved to Other Educational Setting
- Withdrawn by School District
- Academic Performance
- Employment
- Family
- Other

Compulsory Attendance

Several leaver reason codes make reference to the compulsory attendance law (Texas Education Code [TEC] §§25.085-25.086, 2001). The compulsory attendance law requires students to attend school until they are 18 years old. Following are two exceptions to this basic law that are relevant to leaver reporting.

1. The student is at least 17 years old, is attending a General Educational Development (GED) preparation program, and one of the following four conditions have been met:
   - the student has the permission of their parent or guardian to attend the program;
   - the student is required by court order to attend the program;
   - the student has established a residence separate from their parent or guardian; or
   - the student is homeless.
2. The student is at least 16 years old, is attending a GED preparation program, and one of the following two conditions have been met:
   - the student is recommended to take the course by a public agency that has supervision or custody of the student under court order; or

- the student is attending a Job Corps program.

Acceptable Documentation

General Guidelines

Acceptable documentation consists of either a documented request for transcript or a written signed statement from the parent or guardian. Students who are married (or 18 years or older) may sign their own statements. Acceptable documentation also includes verification by the superintendent or authorized representative that the child has been enrolled in a nonpublic school or another program or institution leading to the completion of a high school diploma or GED certificate, has returned to their home country, is being home schooled, has enrolled in college in a program leading to an Associate's or Bachelor's degree, or has other similar circumstances.

Documentation must be signed and dated by an authorized representative of the district. The district should have a written policy stating who can act as an authorized representative for purposes of signing withdrawal forms and other leaver reason documentation.

Withdrawal forms completed by the parent/guardian or adult student should be signed by the parent/guardian or adult student as well as the district representative. Adult students include students who are 18 years old or older, students of any age who are married, and students who have established a separate residence from their parents or guardians.

An original signature is not required on withdrawal forms received in the district by fax. Withdrawal forms received by e-mail do not need to be signed by the parent/guardian or adult student. Written documentation of an oral statement made by the parent/guardian or adult student (in person or by telephone) is acceptable documentation in some situations if it is signed and dated by the district representative.

In all cases but one, the documentation must be provided by the parent/guardian or adult student, or an educational or other institution. To document a student returning to home country, a statement by an adult neighbor or other adult is also allowed.

Documentation is required for dropout reason codes as well as other leaver reason codes. Documentation supporting use of a leaver reason code must exist in the district at the time the leaver data are submitted (no later than the mid-January PEIMS Submission 1 resubmission date).

Merits of leaver documentation are assessed at the time the documentation is requested during a data inquiry investigation. Determination of the acceptability of documentation is made by the professional staff conducting the investigation. These guidelines describe the most common types of documentation the investigator would expect to find supporting use of each leaver reason code. Other documentation that represents good business practice and shows a good faith effort on the part of the district to properly report leaver status will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Consideration will

be given to different interpretations of documentation requirements followed by districts before these guidelines were released.

Intent to Enroll in Another School or Program

Intent to enroll elsewhere must be documented at the time the student withdraws or quits attending school – generally within 10 days of the last day the student attended school. If intent is not documented at that time, the district must acquire documentation that the student is enrolled elsewhere. For students who do not return to school in the fall after completing the prior school year, intent must be documented at the end of the prior school year.

Acceptable documentation of intent to enroll in another school or program is a copy of the withdrawal form (or similar form), completed at the time the student quits attending school in the district, and signed and dated by the parent/guardian or adult student (both signatures are not required) and an authorized representative of the school district (typically the withdrawing agent). The withdrawal form should indicate either where the family is moving, the name of the school the student will be attending, or that the student will be home schooled. An original signature is not required on withdrawal forms received in the district by fax. Withdrawal forms received by e-mail do not need to be signed by the parent/guardian or adult student.

A signed letter from the parent/guardian or adult student written at the time the student quits attending school in the district, stating that the student will enroll elsewhere or will be home schooled, is also acceptable documentation. Other acceptable documentation is written documentation of an oral statement by the parent/guardian or adult student made at the time the student quits attending school in the district, signed and dated by an authorized representative of the district.

Enrollment in Another School or Program

Acceptable documentation of enrollment in another school or educational program is a records request from the school or educational program in which the student is enrolled. Telephone requests must be documented in writing, including the date of the call, the name of the school requesting the records, the name of the person making the request, and the name of the person who received the call.

A signed letter from the parent/guardian or adult student stating that the student is enrolled in another school or program is also acceptable documentation. The letter must state the name and location of the school or program in which the student is enrolled, or that the student is being home schooled. Other acceptable documentation is written documentation of an oral statement by the parent/guardian or adult student providing the name and location of the school or program in which the student is enrolled, or stating that the student is being home schooled, signed and dated by an authorized representative of the district.

Table C-1
Leaver Reason Codes in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)

Leaver code and translation	Explanation/clarification and documentation requirements
Completed high school program	
01* Student graduated	Use for students who meet all graduation requirements (which includes passing the exit-level Texas Assessment of Academic Skills [TAAS]) at any time during the prior school year, including the summer following the close of the prior year. To graduate a student must satisfy the requirements under 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 74, Subchapter B. Special education students must satisfy requirements under 19 TAC §89.1070. Students who complete a General Educational Development (GED) program are not reported as graduates. Students who complete all graduation requirements in one school year, but do not pass the exit-level TAAS until a later year, are reported as graduates in the year in which the TAAS test is passed. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Transcript showing sufficient credits, successful completion of TAAS, and a graduation seal.
19* Student failed exit TAAS, but has met all other graduation requirements	Use for students who completed all other graduation requirements but did not pass the exit-level TAAS before the end of the school year, and did not enroll in school the next year. If the student does enroll the next year, a leaver record is not submitted. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Transcript showing sufficient credits.
31* Student completed the GED, and district has acceptable documentation and student has not returned to school	***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is a copy of the GED certificate or some other written document provided by the testing company showing completion of the GED.
63* Student had graduated in a previous school year, returned to school, and then left again	This code may be used for students who graduated in the reporting district or from another district, state, or country. Students who graduate mid-year should be reported as graduates even if they return to school later in the same year. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Transcript showing sufficient credits, successful completion of TAAS, and a graduation seal.
64* Student had received a GED in a previous school year, returned to school to work toward the completion of a high school diploma, and then left	***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is a copy of the GED certificate or some other written document provided by the testing company showing completion of the GED.
Moved to other educational setting	
28* Student withdrew from school with **declared intent** to enroll in another **Texas public school district** 29* Student withdrew from school with **declared intent** to enroll in **a private school within Texas** 07* Student withdrew from school with **declared intent** to enroll in another public or private **school outside Texas**	Student withdrawn from school and parent/ guardian or adult student indicated at time of withdrawal that the student would be enrolling in another Texas public school district, ***including charter schools*** (code 28), a private school in Texas (code 29), or a public or private school outside Texas (code 07). The district may or may not receive a records request from the other school, and is not required to follow up with the school the parent/guardian or adult student indicated the student would be attending. This code should be used when the parent/ guardian or adult student indicates at the time the student quits attending school that the intent is for the student to enroll elsewhere. If the student intends to enroll in another school in the district, a leaver record is not submitted. ***Documentation Requirement:*** See requirements for documentation of intent to enroll in another school or program.

*School leavers coded with this leaver reason code are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes.

continues

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Table C-1
Leaver Reason Codes in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (continued)

Leaver code and translation	Explanation/clarification and documentation requirements
73* Student withdrew from/left school with **no declared intent** to enroll elsewhere, but the district has received acceptable documentation of enrollment in another **school district in Texas** 74* Student withdrew from/left school with **no declared intent** to enroll elsewhere, but the district has received acceptable documentation of enrollment in a **private school in Texas** 06* Student withdrew from/left school with **no declared intent** to enroll elsewhere, but the district has received acceptable documentation of enrollment in another school district or private **school outside Texas**	These codes would be used in the following situations: 1. The parent/guardian or adult student withdraws the student but does not indicate at that time that the student will be enrolling elsewhere. They may indicate some other reason for the student to be leaving school or not indicate any reason. However, the district receives a records request or communication from the parent/guardian or adult student that the student is enrolled in another public school district in Texas, ***including charter schools*** (code 73); private school in Texas (code74); or public or private school outside Texas (code 6). 2. The student quits attending school without withdrawing but the district receives a records request or communication from the parent/guardian or adult student. 3. Student moves during the summer without withdrawing but the district receives a records request or communication from the parent/guardian or adult student. The district would change the original code assigned to the student, or add this code, when the records request or communication from the parent/guardian or adult student is received. If the original withdrawal date for the student is later than the date the student enrolled in the other school, the withdrawal date must be changed and all attendance accounting records affected by this change must be updated. ***Documentation Requirement:*** See requirements for documentation of enrollment in another school or program.
21* Student officially transferred to another Texas public school district through completion of ACC-041B, Transfers Prior to May 1	Form ACC-041B, Transfers Prior to May 1, is the official transfer form used when a student who lives in one school district transfers to a school in a neighboring school district. These transfers are approved by the superintendents of both districts; the students are coded with an Average Daily Attendance (ADA) eligibility code of 3 or 6 in the districts to which they transfer. This code should be used by districts that do not serve all grade levels for students in grades 7 or higher who have completed all grades offered in the home district and are being transferred to a neighboring district. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Required documentation is a copy of the ACC-041B, Transfers Prior to May 1, completed and signed by both superintendents or their authorized representatives.

*School leavers coded with this leaver reason code are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes.

continues

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Table C-1
Leaver Reason Codes in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (continued)

Leaver code and translation	Explanation/clarification and documentation requirements
22* Student withdrew from/left school to attend an alternative program (GED, Job Training Partnership Act [JTPA] program, trade school, drug rehabilitation program, etc.), is in compliance with compulsory attendance laws (Texas Education Code [TEC] Sections 25.085-25.086), and district has acceptable documentation that the student is working toward the completion of high school (diploma or GED certificate)	Use for students who are at least 17 years old and leave the district to enroll in state approved Adult Education and Family Literacy programs. If the student enrolls in one of these state-approved programs, the district does not need to determine compliance with compulsory attendance laws (state approved programs will not accept students unless they are in compliance) and does not need to confirm that the student is working toward completion of the GED (this is the only option these state-approved programs offer). Also use for migrant students who are at least 17 years old and leave the district to enroll in U.S. Department of Labor High School Equivalency Programs (HEP). If the student enrolls in a HEP, the district does not need to determine compliance with compulsory attendance laws and does not need to confirm that the student is working toward completion of the GED. Also use for students who are at least 16 years old and leave the district to enroll in Job Corps training programs. Job Corps is the only program in which 16 year olds can voluntarily enroll and still be in compliance with compulsory attendance laws. If the student enrolls in a Job Corps program, the district does not need to determine compliance with compulsory attendance laws and does not need to confirm that the student is working toward completion of the GED. Also use for students who are at least 17 years old and leave the district to enroll in programs other than state-approved Adult Education and Family Literacy, HEP, or Job Corps programs to work toward completion of a high school diploma or GED certificate. For alternative programs other than state-approved Adult Education and Family Literacy, HEP, or Job Corps programs the district must determine that the student is working toward a high school diploma or GED certificate because these programs may offer students other options such as job training. For 17 year old students, the district must also determine that the student meets one of three additional conditions of the compulsory attendance law: student has parent/guardian permission to attend the program, student has established a residence separate from the parent/guardian, or student is homeless. The district is not required to track the student's attendance or progress in the alternative program or to ascertain that the student actually obtains a high school diploma or GED certificate. Do not use for students 17 or younger who are court-ordered into an alternative program - use code 72. ***Documentation Requirement:*** See requirements for documentation of intent to enroll in another school or program and requirements for documentation of enrollment in another school or program. If the program is not a state approved Adult Education and Family Literacy, HEP, or Job Corps program, the documentation must indicate that the student is in compliance with the compulsory attendance law and is pursuing a high school diploma or GED certificate. Written documentation of an oral statement by a representative of the alternative program, signed and dated by an authorized representative of the school district, is acceptable.
70 Student withdrew from school to attend an alternative program (GED, JTPA, HEP, trade school, drug rehabilitation program, etc.) but is not in compliance with compulsory attendance laws	Use this code for students who leave the district to enroll in an alternative program but are not in compliance with the compulsory attendance law. The student may or may not be working toward a high school diploma or GED certificate. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is any written documentation (including documentation of oral statements by the parent/guardian or student) indicating that the student intends to or has enrolled in an alternative program.

*School leavers coded with this leaver reason code are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes.

continues

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Table C-1
Leaver Reason Codes in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (continued)

Leaver code and translation	Explanation/clarification and documentation requirements
71 Student withdrew from school to attend an alternative program (GED, JTPA, trade school, drug rehabilitation program, etc.), is in compliance with compulsory attendance laws, but district does not have acceptable documentation that student is working toward completion of high school (diploma or GED certificate)	Use for students who are at least 18 years old and leave the district to enroll in alternative programs but are not working toward completion of a high school diploma or GED certificate. For example, a student who leaves the district to enroll in a job training program could be assigned leaver reason code 71. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is any written documentation (including documentation of oral statements by the parent/guardian or adult student) indicating that the student intends to or has enrolled in an alternative program.
72* Student was withdrawn from school by court order to attend a specific alternative program, is under compulsory attendance age, and district has a copy of the court order on file	Use for students 17 and younger who are court-ordered into an alternative program. The district is not required to confirm enrollment or attendance in the court-ordered program. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Copy of the court order.
60* Student withdrew at request of student, parent, guardian, or other person with legal control of the student for home schooling	Student withdrawn from or left school and parent/guardian or adult student indicates at time of withdrawal that the student will be home schooled or when contacted by district that the student is being home schooled. The district is not required to obtain evidence that the program being provided meets educational standards. ***Documentation Requirement:*** See requirements for documentation of intent to enroll in another school or program and requirements for documentation of enrollment in another school or program.
24* Student withdrew from/left school to enter college with documentation that he or she is working towards an Associate's or Bachelor's degree	This code is for students who leave secondary school to enter college early. It should be used for students who are enrolled full-time (at least 9 credit hours per semester). ***Documentation Requirement:*** See requirements for documentation of intent to enroll in another school or program and requirements for documentation of enrollment in another school or program. Documentation of enrollment in a college or university must indicate that the student is enrolled full-time in an academic program.
25 Student withdrew from/left school to enter college with no evidence of working towards an Associate's or Bachelor's degree	This code can be used for students who enroll in college but do not meet the criteria described under code 24. For example, a student who enrolls in one electronics course at the local community college could be assigned leaver reason code 25. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is any written documentation (including documentation of oral statements by the parent/guardian or student) indicating that the student intends to enroll or has enrolled in college.
Withdrawn by school district	
78* Student was expelled for behavior qualifying as a Class C misdemeanor or worse (Code of Criminal Procedure), the behavior occurred on school property or at school-related functions, and failure to attend school results from either (1) adjudication for conduct that was delinquent or indicates a need for supervision per Section 51.03 of the Family Code, or (2) conviction of and sentencing for an offense under the Penal Code	This code is used for situations in which: • the student was expelled under the provisions of TEC §37.007, and • the term of expulsion has not expired or the student's failure to attend school is due to court action. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Due process documentation supporting the expulsion.

*School leavers coded with this leaver reason code are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes.

continues

Table C-1
Leaver Reason Codes in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (continued)

Leaver code and translation	Explanation/clarification and documentation requirements
79 Student was expelled for behavior qualifying as a Class C misdemeanor or worse (Code of Criminal Procedure), the behavior occurred on school property or at school-related functions, but failure to attend school is neither a result of (1) adjudication for conduct that was delinquent or indicates a need for supervision per Section 51.03 of the Family Code, nor (2) conviction of and sentencing for an offense under the Penal Code	This code is used for situations in which: • the student was expelled under the provisions of TEC §37.007, and • the term of expulsion has expired, and • the student's failure to attend school is not due to court action. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Due process documentation supporting the expulsion.
26 Student was expelled (due to reasons other than criminal behavior), with no further participation in a school or educational program to continue working towards the completion of a high school diploma or GED certificate	All expulsions are included in TEC §37.007. Refer to leaver reason codes 78 and 79.
62* Student was withdrawn by the district when it was discovered that the student was not a resident or had falsified enrollment information	This code is used for situations in which the district discovers when verifying enrollment information that the student is not a resident of the district. These are rare situations in which enrollment information was falsified or there was a misunderstanding about which school district the student's residence was located in at the time of enrollment. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Due process documentation supporting the withdrawal.
67* Student was withdrawn from school after failing to provide immunization records within 30 days of enrollment	With few exceptions, students enrolling in Texas public schools must be immunized against specified contagious diseases. Under Texas Department of Health rules districts must provisionally admit students who have begun the required immunizations but may withdraw those who do not complete the immunizations within 30 days. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Due process documentation supporting the withdrawal.
76 Student age 18 or over, district revoked enrollment because student had more than 5 unexcused absences in a semester	A 1999 change to the compulsory attendance law (TEC §25.085) allows districts to revoke for the remainder of the school year the enrollment of a student age 18 or older who has more than 5 unexcused absences in a semester. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Due process documentation supporting the revocation.
Academic performance	
11 Student withdrew from/left school because of low or failing grades 12 Student withdrew from/left school because of poor attendance, enrollment not revoked by district 13 Student withdrew from/left school because of language problems 14 Student withdrew from/left school because of age 27 Student failed exit TAAS, has not met all other graduation requirements, and has no evidence of further participation in a school or educational program to continue working towards the completion of a high school diploma or GED certificate	These codes should be used if the parent/guardian or student indicates verbally or in writing that the reason the student is leaving school or has left school is because of low or failing grades (code 11), poor attendance (code 12), limited English proficiency (code 13), age (code 14), or TAAS failure (code 27). Whether the parent/guardian or student completes withdrawal papers or the student just stops coming to school is not relevant to assigning these codes. These codes may also be assigned based on district review of the student's history of attendance and academic performance before leaving school. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is any written documentation (including documentation of oral statements by the parent/guardian or student) indicating that the student is leaving school or has left school because of low or failing grades (code 11), poor attendance (code 12), limited English proficiency (code 13), age (code 14), or TAAS failure (code 27).

*School leavers coded with this leaver reason code are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes.

continues

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Table C-1
Leaver Reason Codes in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (continued)

Leaver code and translation	Explanation/clarification and documentation requirements
Employment	
02 Student withdrew from/ left school to pursue a job 04 Student withdrew from/ left school to join the military	These codes should be used if the parent/guardian or student indicates verbally or in writing that the reason the student is leaving school or has left school is to pursue a job (code 02) or join the military (code 04). Whether the parent/guardian or adult student completes withdrawal papers or the student just stops coming to school is not relevant to assigning these codes. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is any written documentation (including documentation of oral statements by the parent/guardian or student) indicating that the student is leaving school or left school to pursue a job (code 02) or join the military (code 04).
Family	
08 Student withdrew from/left school because of pregnancy	This code should be used only if the parent/guardian or student indicates verbally or in writing that the student is leaving school or left school because of pregnancy. This code should not be assigned based only on the fact that the student is pregnant at the time she leaves school. This code can be used for male or female students. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is any written documentation (including documentation of oral statements by the parent/guardian or student) indicating that the student is leaving school or left school because of pregnancy.
09 Student withdrew from/left school to marry	This code should be used only if the parent/guardian or student indicates verbally or in writing that the student is leaving school or left school because of marriage. The district is not required to confirm that the student is married. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is any written documentation (including documentation of oral statements by the parent/guardian or student) indicating that the student is leaving school or left school because of marriage.
15 Student withdrew from/left school due to homelessness or non-permanent residency	***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is any written documentation (including documentation of oral statements by the parent/guardian or student) indicating that the student is leaving school or left school because of homelessness or non-permanent residency.
66* Student was removed from the district by Child Protective Services (CPS) and the district has not been informed of the student's current status or enrollment	This code applies only to Child Protective Services. Private agencies that provide asylum for students do not have the legal authority to remove students from school. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Due process documentation supporting this withdrawal.
Other	
03* Student died while enrolled in school or during the summer break after completing the prior school year	***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is a copy of the death certificate or obituary.
10 Student withdrew from/left school due to alcohol or other drug abuse problems	This code should be used only if the parent/guardian or student indicates verbally or in writing that the student is leaving school or left school due to alcohol or other drug abuse problems. Student does not have to be admitted into a treatment program. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Any written documentation (including documentation of oral statements by the parent/guardian or adult student) indicating that the student is leaving school or left school due to alcohol or other drug abuse problems.

*School leavers coded with this leaver reason code are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes.

continues

Table C-1
Leaver Reason Codes in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (continued)

Leaver code and translation	Explanation/clarification and documentation requirements
16* Student withdrew from/left school with documentation of having returned to home country, but with no evidence of enrollment in school in home country	Use for students whose families are leaving the United States. The citizenship of the student is not relevant in assigning this code. This code can also be used for foreign exchange students. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is a copy of the Transfer Document for Binational Migrant Student completed at the time the student withdraws from school, signed and dated by an authorized representative of the school district. Acceptable documentation is also a copy of the withdrawal form (or similar form) signed and dated by the parent/guardian or adult student (both signatures are not required) and an authorized representative of the school district (typically the withdrawing agent). The withdrawal form should indicate that the student is leaving school because the family is returning to the home country and should specify the destination. An original signature is not required on withdrawal forms received in the district by fax. Withdrawal forms received by e-mail do not need to be signed by the parent/guardian or adult student. A signed letter from the parent/guardian or adult student stating that the student is leaving school because the family is returning to the home county is also acceptable documentation. Other acceptable documentation is written documentation of an oral statement by the parent/guardian, adult student, or other adult with knowledge of the family's whereabouts, signed and dated by an authorized representative of the school district.
30* Student withdrew from/left school to enter a health care facility	Health care facilities provide medical and/or rehabilitation services. They include hospitals, nursing homes, cancer treatment centers, burn centers, drug and rehabilitation facilities, and mental health treatment facilities. In Texas, school districts are required to serve students in health care facilities located within the boundaries of the district. If the student is being served by the district, a leaver record is not submitted. Use this code for private health care facilities that provide their own educational programs. Also use for students who are entering a health care facility outside the district if the district does not know which school district will be providing educational services to the student. Use for students who are entering health care facilities outside Texas. ***Documentation Requirement:*** See requirements for documentation of intent to enroll in another school or program and requirements for documentation of enrollment in another school or program. These requirements also apply to students withdrawing from/leaving school to enter a health-care facility.
61* Student was incarcerated in a facility outside the boundaries of the district	This code applies to juveniles as well as adult students incarcerated in facilities such as juvenile detention centers or jails outside the boundaries of the district. In Texas, school districts are required to serve students incarcerated in facilities located within the boundaries of the district. If the student is being served by the district, a leaver record is not submitted. Do not use this code for students who are placed in a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP). If the student is enrolled in a JJAEP, a leaver record is not submitted. ***Documentation Requirement:*** Acceptable documentation is written documentation from the facility in which the student is incarcerated. A signed statement from the parent providing the name and location of the facility in which the student is incarcerated is also acceptable documentation. Other acceptable documentation is written documentation of an oral statement by the parent/guardian providing the name and location of the facility in which the student is incarcerated, signed and dated by an authorized representative of the district.

*School leavers coded with this leaver reason code are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes.

continues

Table C-1
Leaver Reason Codes in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) (continued)

Leaver code and translation	Explanation/clarification and documentation requirements
65 Student did not return to school after completing a JJAEP term, and the student has not graduated or completed/received a GED	Do not use this code for students who enroll in another school district or private school after completing a JJAEP term.
99 Other (reason unknown or not listed above)	This code is used for students who are withdrawn by the school district after a period of time because they have quit attending school and their reason for leaving is not known. It is also used for students who withdrew from/left school for reasons not listed above.

*School leavers coded with this leaver reason code are not included in the calculation of the dropout rate used for accountability purposes.

Appendix D
Dropout Data Collection and Reporting in Texas and Other States

Table D-1
Dropout Data Collection and Reporting in Texas and Other States

	Data collection			Type of rate reported[b]					Student group			Public report			
State[a]	Unit of collection	Grades included	NCES definition	Annual dropout rate	Longitudinal dropout rate	Completion	Graduation	Attrition	Race/ethnicity	Gender	Socioeconomic status	State	District/county	School	Used in accountability system
Alabama	student	9-12	X	X	P		X		X	X		X	X	X	
Arizona	student	7-12	X	X			X		X	X		X	X	X	
California	school	7-12		X	P		X		X	X		X	X	X	
Colorado	school	7-12		X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Florida	student	9-12		X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X
Georgia	school	6-12	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
Illinois	school	9-12	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Indiana	school	7-12		X			X					X	X	X	X
Kentucky	school	7-12	X	X					X	X		X	X	X	X
Louisiana	student	7-12	X	X								X	X	X	X
Maryland	school	9-12	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X
Massachusetts	school	6-12	X	X	P		X		X	X		X	X	X	
Michigan	school	9-12		X		X	E					X	X	X	
Minnesota	student	7-12	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Missouri	district	9-12	X	X	X		X		X			X	X		
New Jersey	student	7-12	X	X			X		X	X		X	X	X	X
New York	school	9-12		X	X	X	X					X	X	X	X
North Carolina	school	7-12		X			P		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Ohio	school	7-12	X	X			X			X		X	X	X	X
Pennsylvania	school	7-12	X	X			X		X	X		X	X	X	
Tennessee	school	9-12	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	X
Texas	**student**	**7-12**		**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
Virginia	school	7-12	X	X			X		X	X		X	X	X	
Washington	student	9-12		X			X					X	X		
Wisconsin	school	7-12	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X	

Source. Data were obtained from state websites and are current as of March 2002. The data in column 4 are from *Dropout Rates in the United States: 2000* (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001).

[a]These are the 25 most populous states based on the 2000 Census. [b]"P" indicates projected. "E" indicates estimated.

Notes for Table D-1

Data Collection

Unit of Collection. What is the smallest level of data collected by the state education agency – student, school, or district/county?

Grades Included. What grades are included in the data collection?

NCES Definition

Does the agency use the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) definition of a dropout? These data were reported to NCES based on 1998-99 data. Some states may have begun using the NCES definition after 1998-99.

Student Groups

Race Ethnicity. Does the agency disaggregate information by race/ethnicity?

Gender. Does the agency disaggregate information by gender?

Socioeconomic Status. Does the agency disaggregate information by socioeconomic status?

Public Reports

State. Does the agency report a state dropout rate?

District/County. Does the agency report dropout rates by school district or county?

School. Does the agency report dropout rates by school/campus?

Used in Accountability System

Is the dropout rate used to rate school and/or district performance? In more than one state, the graduation rate is used instead.

State Website Addresses

Alabama	http://www.alsde.edu/
Arizona	http://www.ade.state.az.us/
California	http://goldmine.cde.ca.gov/
Colorado	http://www.cde.state.co.us/
Florida	http://www.firn.edu/doe/

State Website Addresses (continued)

Georgia	http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/
Illinois	http://www.isbe.state.il.us/
Indiana	http://www.ideanet.doe.state.in.us/
Kentucky	http://www.kde.state.ky.us/
Louisiana	http://www.doe.state.la.us/
Maryland	http://www.msde.state.md.us/
Massachusetts	http://www.doe.mass.edu/
Michigan	http://www.mde.state.mi.us/
Minnesota	http://www.educ.state.mn.us/
Missouri	http://dese.state.mo.us/
New Jersey	http://www.state.nj.us/education/
New York	http://www.nysed.gov/
North Carolina	http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/
Ohio	http://www.ode.state.oh.us/
Pennsylvania	http://www.pde.state.pa.us/
Tennessee	http://www.state.tn.us/education/
Texas	http://www.tea.state.tx.us/
Virginia	http://www.pen.k12.va.us/
Washington	http://www.k12.wa.us/
Wisconsin	http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/

Appendix E
Comparison of a Grade 9-12 Longitudinal Dropout Rate and a Grade 9-12 Attrition Rate

Figure E-1
Comparison of a Grade 9-12 Longitudinal Dropout Rate and a Grade 9-12 Attrition Rate

Students in Attrition Rate Who Are Not Counted as Dropouts in Longitudinal Rate

Graduates. The attrition rate includes early graduates and any on-time graduates who were not enrolled in Grade 12 in the fall of 1998-99.

GED.[a] The attrition rate includes students who received a GED certificate rather than a high school diploma.

Continuing Students. The attrition rate includes continuing students if they were not in Grade 12 in 1998-99. The most common reason for students to fall behind a grade level is retention in Grade 9.

Transfers Out. The attrition rate includes all students who transferred out of Texas public schools or left for any reason. The longitudinal rate excludes transfers and students who left Texas public schools for reasons other than dropping out. Reasons for exclusion from the longitudinal rate include the following.

- Enrolled in another educational setting (public school, private school, alternative school leading to a diploma or GED certificate, home schooling, or entered college early in Texas or out of state)
- Withdrew with intent to enroll elsewhere
- Returned to home country
- Removed by district (expelled for criminal behavior, falsified enrollment information, no immunization, etc.)
- Entered health care facility or incarcerated outside district
- Removed by Child Protective Services
- Died
- Destination not reported to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) by school districts (before 1997-98)

Transfers-In and Growth. Some attrition rates include a growth adjustment that is an estimate of the number of students transferring into Texas public schools. The attrition rate calculated by TEA is not adjusted for growth. The longitudinal rate assigns all transfers-in to the appropriate cohort and determines outcomes in the same way that outcomes for starting Grade 9 students are determined.

Students Previously Counted. The 1999 attrition rate includes students from the class of 1998 who were repeating Grade 9 in 1995-96. These students were also included in the 1998 attrition rate.

Data Errors. The attrition rate includes students removed from the longitudinal calculation because their statuses cannot be determined due to data errors.

Students Included in Both Longitudinal Dropout Rate and Attrition Rate

Both the longitudinal dropout rate and the attrition rate include students in the class of 1999 who left school before graduation for the following reasons.

- Academic performance (poor attendance, low grades, failing TAAS,[b] etc.)
- Employment (pursue job or join military)
- Family (marriage or pregnancy)
- Alternative education (not leading to a diploma or GED certificate)
- Discipline (failure to return following expulsion or JJAEP[c] term)
- Alcohol or other drug abuse problems
- Whereabouts unknown

Dropouts in Longitudinal Rate Who Are Not Included in Attrition Rate

The longitudinal dropout rate includes the following students who are excluded from the attrition rate.

- Grade 12 Dropouts. The attrition rate does not include students who enroll in Grade 12 in 1998-99 but drop out before graduating.
- Military District and Charter School Dropouts. The attrition rate does not include students who drop out from districts located on military bases or charter schools.

Grade 9-12 Attrition Rate
Students from the class of 1999 who for any reason were not enrolled in Grade 12 in a Texas public school in the fall of the 1998-99 school year

Grade 9-12 Longitudinal Dropout Rate
Students from the class of 1999 who dropped out under the accountability dropout definition

[a]General Educational Development. [b]Texas Assessment of Academic Skills. [c]Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.

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Table E-1
Reconciliation of the Texas Education Agency Attrition and Longitudinal Dropout Counts, Grades 9-12, Texas Public Schools, 1999

Attrition count[a]	123,375
Longitudinal dropout count	20,231
Difference in counts	103,144

Sources of differences in counts. The longitudinal dropout and attrition counts differ in three primary ways: (1) in determining the final status of students; (2) in defining the initial cohorts; and (3) in counting transfers in and out of the public school system.

	Plus	Minus	Difference
Graduates before 1999 not enrolled in Grade 12 in the fall of 1998	6,849		
1998-99 graduates not enrolled in Grade 12 in the fall of 1998	9,897		
General Educational Development certificate recipients not enrolled in Grade 12 in the fall of 1998	8,491		
Students continuing school, but not in Grade 12 by the fall of 1998	13,694		
1998-99 dropouts who were enrolled in Grade 12 in the fall of 1998		2,437	
All differences in final statuses			36,494
The attrition count begins with all students enrolled in Grade 9, including those repeating Grade 9. The longitudinal count assigns each student to one and only one cohort, so only first-time Grade 9 students are counted.	51,939		
The attrition count ends with all students in Grade 12, regardless of when they began Grade 9. The longitudinal count includes only those Grade 12 students who began Grade 9 with the cohort.		17,578	
All differences in cohorts			34,361
An attrition rate may include a growth factor; that is, an estimate of students transferring into the Texas public school system. Students transferring out are included in the attrition count itself.	0[b]		
The longitudinal cohort counts and adds transfers-in on grade level.		59,728	
Students leaving the public school system for any reason other than dropping out are subtracted from the longitudinal dropout count.	92,462		
All differences in transfers and growth			32,734
To track students from year to year in the longitudinal rate requires that students have valid identification records. Students with errors that prevent tracking have to be excluded from the cohort. The attrition rate uses aggregate counts and so includes records of Grade 9 students who cannot be tracked.	5,607		
Grade 12 enrollment for the attrition count includes students with identification errors. The longitudinal count excludes them.		5,367	
It is not possible to place all student records in one or the other count, or both, because the decision rules and counts are based on different types of student data records.		685	
All differences in errors in student records and data anomalies			-445
All differences			103,144

[a]Enrollment in Grade 9 in the fall of the 1995-96 school year minus enrollment in Grade 12 in the fall of the 1998-99 school year. [b]The Texas Education Agency does not include a growth factor in the attrition calculation.

Appendix F
Dropout Policy in Texas

Appendix F
Dropout Policy in Texas

Current concerns over at-risk behavior and dropping out of school can be traced to the education reform movement of the early 1980's (Roderick, 1993). In 1983, *A Nation at Risk* deplored the condition of education in the United States (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). A year later, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 72, which mandated sweeping reforms in the state's public education system. The bill, among other changes, increased graduation requirements, established a minimum competency testing program with an exit-level test for graduation, prohibited social promotion, limited the number of permissible absences, and linked participation in extracurricular activities to academic standards with a "no pass/no play" policy.

HB 72 also addressed high school dropouts. The legislation authorized the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to implement a system for collecting data on student dropouts and to begin developing a program to reduce the statewide longitudinal dropout rate to no more than 5 percent (TEC §11.205, 1986). At the same time, the bill directed the Texas Department of Community Affairs (TDCA) to assess the state's dropout problem and its effect on the Texas economy. Under contract with TDCA, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) conducted much of the research, known as the Texas School Dropout Survey Project, and presented a report to the 69th Legislature (IDRA, 1986).

IDRA estimated that a third of Texas students dropped out before completing high school. The dropout rates for African Americans and Hispanics were notably higher than that for White students. The reasons most frequently cited by students for leaving school included failing grades, excessive absences, marriage and pregnancy, and financial difficulties at home. Few Texas school districts reported having dropout prevention programs, and fewer still had evaluation data for those programs. Losses in potential earnings and tax revenues to the state for each cohort of dropouts were estimated to be substantial.

Alarmed by the magnitude of the dropout problem in Texas and questioning the effectiveness of existing reform efforts to help students at risk of dropping out, the legislature passed HB 1010 in 1987 (Frazer, Nichols, & Wilkinson, 1991). HB 1010 substantially increased state and local responsibilities for collecting student dropout information, monitoring dropout rates, and providing dropout reduction services (TEC §§11.205-11.207, 1988). TEA was required to establish a statewide dropout information clearinghouse and to form, along with eight other state agencies, an interagency council to coordinate policies and resources for dropouts and at-risk students. A definition of a dropout was added to statute. In addition, the agency was directed to produce biennial reports for the legislature presenting a broad range of statewide dropout statistics and a systematic plan to reduce dropout rates for all segments of the student population. HB 1010 also required school districts to designate one or more at-risk coordinators and to provide remedial and support programs for students at risk of dropping out of school.

In conjunction with these legislative initiatives, the State Board of Education (SBOE) took action in 1987 to increase the "holding power" of Texas schools. The board amended the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) to require that districts adopt policies outlining academic options available to students at risk of dropping out (19 TAC §75.195, 1988). Under the rule, each school district was directed to have in place, by September 1, 1988, a plan designed to identify potential dropouts and help them stay in school. A student in Grades 7-12 was identified as "at risk" if he or she met one or more of the following conditions (19 TAC §75.195, 1988):

- the student had been retained one or more times in Grades 1-6 based on academic achievement and remained unable to master the Essential Elements at the current grade level;
- the student was two or more years below grade level in reading or mathematics;
- the student had failed at least two courses in one or more semesters and was not expected to graduate within four years of entering ninth grade; or
- the student had failed one or more of the reading, writing, or mathematics sections of the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS), beginning with the seventh grade.

In addition to these criteria, specified in statute, the board rules permitted school districts to consider any environmental, familial, economic, social, developmental, or other psychosocial factors that may have contributed to a student's inability to progress academically.

Also in 1987, the SBOE adopted the first long-range plan for Texas public school education (SBOE, 1987). Calling at-risk students one of the focal points of the four-year plan, the board affirmed its commitment to help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and other students. The plan called for programs to reduce the dropout rate and encourage higher attendance. Dropout reduction has been a component of each subsequent long-range plan adopted by the SBOE (1991, 1995, 2000).

In 1989, the 71st Legislature passed a number of bills focused on dropouts and at-risk students. Under HB 850, known as the driver's license law, an individual under the age of 18, who had neither graduated from high school nor obtained a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, could not receive a license to drive unless he or she: (a) was enrolled in school and had attended at least 80 days the previous semester; or (b) had been enrolled for at least 45 days in a high school equivalency program (Act approved June 16, 1989).

Senate Bill (SB) 152 directed the SBOE to set an annual dropout rate target for Texas that would reduce the statewide longitudinal dropout rate to 5 percent by 1997-98. Districts in which 100 or more students dropped out and those in which 5 percent or more of the students were identified as being at risk were required to prepare a dropout reduction plan. Each year, districts exceeding the state dropout rate target were required to allocate a percentage of their compensatory education funds to remedial and support programs for at-risk students (TEC §11.205, 1990).

Senate Bill 1668 expanded the criteria for identifying at-risk students to include prekindergarten through Grade 6 (TEC §21.557, 1990). It also authorized the SBOE to adopt rules under which school districts could use community-based dropout recovery education programs to provide alternative education for at-risk youths (TEC §21.557, 1990). In addition, the bill directed school districts to notify the parents of eligible children about prekindergarten programs offered (TEC §21.136, 1990). Finally, SB 1668 required TEA and the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse to assist regional education service centers in establishing substance abuse prevention and intervention programs in the public schools (TEC §11.208, 1990).

SB 417 contained several provisions related to dropout prevention and reduction. The age at which a student must begin school was lowered from seven to six, and the compulsory attendance age was raised from 16 to 17 (TEC §21.032, 1990). The five-day absence rule enacted in HB 72 was replaced with a requirement that a student attend class at least 80 days per semester to receive course credit (TEC §21.041, 1990). SB 417 also added to the criteria for school district accreditation a measure of the effectiveness of district dropout prevention and recovery programs (TEC §21.753, 1990).

For dropouts under the age of 19 who returned to school, a "second chance" program was created through the Office of the Governor (TEC §34.032, 1990). The program offered rewards for graduating, ranging from tuition credits for higher education to various employment opportunities. Finally, SB 417 established a number of pilot programs for at-risk students, including: programs aimed at early intervention for students in prekindergarten through the elementary grade levels (TEC §11.2052, 1990); school-age parenting and pregnancy programs (TEC §21.114, 1990); education and involvement programs for parents of at-risk youths (TEC §21.929, 1990); and a program to prepare at-risk students to earn high school equivalency certificates (TEC §11.351, 1990).

In 1993, the legislature again expanded the list of at-risk criteria, this time to address student pregnancy and parenthood (TEC §21.557, 1994). When the Texas Education Code was readopted in 1995, the definition of a dropout was eliminated. SBOE authority to promulgate rules regarding at-risk classification and dropouts was also repealed. The definition of a dropout in the TAC and provisions that allowed school districts to consider risk factors other than those identified in statute were subsequently repealed by the SBOE. Thereafter, school districts were restricted to statutory criteria when reporting numbers of students identified as at risk through the state's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS). The *PEIMS Data Standards* (cf. TEA, 2001c) provided the operational definition of a dropout.

The legislature also removed the requirement that districts prepare separate dropout reduction plans. Local dropout reduction efforts were included in district and campus improvement plans (TEC §§11.252-11.253, 1996). Districts were still obligated to provide compensatory and accelerated instruction to students who were at risk of dropping out of school (TEC §29.081, 1996).

At the state level, the goals of reducing the cross-sectional and longitudinal dropout rates to 5 percent were readopted, as were the requirements that TEA report dropout data collected from school districts and publish a state plan to reduce the dropout rate (TEC §§39.181-39.185, 1996). Annual

dropout statistics had to be reported in the comprehensive biennial and interim reports to the legislature (TEC §39.182-39.185, 1996)). Language referring to a state dropout information clearinghouse and interagency task force was not included in the revised code.

In 1997, the compulsory attendance age was again raised, requiring a student to attend school until his or her 18th birthday (TEC §25.085, 1997). A number of bills passed in 1999 by the 76th Legislature focused on dropout prevention. Standards were adopted for community-based dropout recovery education programs (TEC §29.081, 1999). Also, money was made available to school districts to create special programs for Grade 9 students who were not expected to meet the academic requirements to advance to Grade 10 (TEC §29.086, 1999) and for after-school programs for middle-school-age students. Other programs targeted preschool and the early elementary grades (TEC §28.006, 1999).

In 2001, the Texas Legislature signaled a subtle but important shift in focus when HB 1144 added district Grade 9-12 completion rates to the list of performance indicators in statute (TEC §39.051, 2001). This measure, as a complement to the dropout rate, provides an indicator of student and school success rather than failure. HB 1144 also required an annual independent audit of school district dropout data submissions. The audits will begin with dropout records for students who drop out during the 2001-02 school year (TEC §39.055, 2001). The reports on 2001-02 leavers are due to be submitted to the agency in April 2003.

Under SB 702, TEA's comprehensive report to the legislature on the status of public education in Texas was changed from a biennial to an annual publication. New dropout information required in the *Comprehensive Annual Report on Texas Public Schools* (TEA, 2001b) included: projected cross-sectional and longitudinal dropout rates for Grades 9-12; dropout rates of students placed in alternative education programs; and completion rates for students in Grades 9-12. In addition, the report includes a comparison of the performance of open-enrollment charter schools predominantly serving students at risk of dropping out of school with the performance of regular school districts.

Appendix G
History of Texas Education Agency Dropout Definition

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History of Texas Education Agency Dropout Definition

A dropout was defined in law in 1987 as a student in Grades 7-12 who does not hold a high school diploma or the equivalent and who is absent from school for 30 or more consecutive days with no evidence of being enrolled in another public or private school (Texas Education Code [TEC] §11.205, 1988). As implemented by the State Board of Education, students with an approved excuse were excluded from the dropout definition, as were students who returned to school the following semester or school year (19 Texas Administrative Code [TAC] §61.64, 1988). This definition is operationalized in the *Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Data Standards* (cf. TEA, 2001c). The first PEIMS dropout records were submitted for students dropping out during the 1987-88 school year.

The original dropout definition in the *1988-89 PEIMS Data Standards* did not count as dropouts students who received General Educational Development (GED) certificates because the GED testing program was developed as a means of objectively certifying whether an individual had educational development equivalent to that of a high school graduate. Students who transferred to other educational settings leading to high school diplomas, GED certificates, or college degrees were also excluded. Students who withdrew to enter health care facilities and those incarcerated in correctional facilities were also not included in the dropout definition.

Beginning with the 1992-93 dropout rate, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) searched dropout data for prior years to identify previously reported dropouts. These repeat dropouts were removed from the dropout count for the current year. Also beginning in 1992-93, a student expelled for committing certain types of criminal behavior on school property or at a school-related event was removed from the dropout count if the term of expulsion had not expired. In 1999, Senate Bill (SB) 103 amended the accountability statute to exclude all expelled students from the dropout count during the terms of expulsion (TEC §39.051, 1999.)

Legislative direction given at the time the revised Texas Education Code was adopted in 1995 indicated that, in deleting the dropout definition from code, it was intended that students who meet all graduation requirements but do not pass the exit-level Texas Assessment of Academic Skills not be counted as dropouts. Also beginning that year, students who withdrew from school to return to their home countries were not counted as dropouts, even if the districts did not have evidence that the students had re-enrolled in school.

When the age of compulsory attendance was raised from 16 to 17 in 1989, an exemption was added for students who are at least 17 years old and enrolled in GED preparation programs (TEC §§21.032-33, 1990). In 1999, SB 1472 added an exemption for students who are at least 16 and enrolled in Job Corps programs (TEC §25.086, 1999).

In 2001, the legislature revisited the exemption of students attending school while in correctional facilities or residential treatment centers. Under House Bill 457, a student who fails to enroll in school

after release from one of these facilities will no longer be counted as a dropout for the district in which the facility is located if that district is not the student's home district (TEC §39.073, 2001). Table G-1 on page 94 shows the evolution of the TEA dropout definition.

Table G-1
Chronology of Texas Education Agency (TEA) Dropout Definition and Data Processing Enhancements

Dropout definition	Data processing
1987-88	
A dropout is defined in the Texas Education Code, Texas Administrative Code, and *Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Data Standards* as a student in Grades 7-12 who does not hold a high school diploma or the equivalent and is absent from school for 30 or more consecutive days. Students with an approved excuse or documented transfer are excluded from the dropout definition, as are students who return to school the following semester or year.	TEA begins collecting individual student-level records for students who drop out of school.
1990-91	
	TEA begins collecting individual student-level enrollment records and graduate records. An automated search of enrollment records is instituted, and reported dropouts found to be enrolled in another Texas public school district the following year are removed from the dropout count.
1992-93	
Students previously counted as a dropout, back to 1990-91, are removed from the dropout count. Students expelled for committing certain types of criminal behavior on school property or at school-related events are removed from the dropout count during the term of expulsion.	TEA begins collecting individual student-level attendance records. An automated search of attendance records is instituted, and reported dropouts found to be in attendance in another Texas public school district later in the year are removed from the dropout count. An automated search of graduate records and General Educational Development (GED) certificate records is instituted, and reported dropouts found to have graduated or received a GED are removed from the dropout count.
1994-95	
The definition of a dropout is removed from state law and State Board of Education rule. Students who meet all graduation requirements but fail the exit-level Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) are removed from the dropout count. Students who return to their home countries are excluded from the dropout count even if there is no evidence that they have re-enrolled in school.	
1995-96	
Students who enroll in alternative programs that are not state approved but that meet certain criteria are removed from the dropout count.	
1997-98	
	TEA begins collecting individual student-level records for all school leavers — graduates, dropouts, and students who left school for other reasons. Additional audits of dropout rates calculated from these data are conducted at the state level.
1998-99	
	The automated search of enrollment records is expanded to include students who return to school in the fall but leave before the PEIMS snapshot date or do not return until after the PEIMS snapshot date.
1999-00	
Sixteen-year-olds enrolled in Job Corps programs leading to a high school equivalency certificate are removed from the dropout count. The circumstances under which expelled students are excluded from the dropout count are expanded in statute to cover students expelled for any reason.	Within a district, each dropout is assigned to a campus based on attendance or reported campus of accountability.

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Appendix H
Supplemental Tables

Table H-1
Number of Students in Attendance and Dropouts, by Grade, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

Grade level	Students		Dropouts	
	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Grade 7	321,799	17.7	535	3.0
Grade 8	316,889	17.4	1,025	5.8
Grade 9	383,656	21.1	4,957	28.2
Grade 10	302,088	16.6	3,668	20.9
Grade 11	253,569	13.9	3,525	20.1
Grade 12	240,939	13.2	3,853	21.9
Grades 7-12	1,818,940	100	17,563	100

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Table H-2
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Gender, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

	Female		Male	
Grade level	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Grade 7	283	0.2	252	0.2
Grade 8	534	0.3	491	0.3
Grade 9	2,206	1.2	2,751	1.4
Grade 10	1,585	1.1	2,083	1.3
Grade 11	1,525	1.2	2,000	1.6
Grade 12	1,696	1.4	2,157	1.8
Grades 7-12	7,829	0.9	9,734	1.0

Table H-3
Students, Dropouts, and Annual Dropout Rate, by Student Group and Grade, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual dropout rate (%)
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Grade 7					
African American	46,674	14.5	102	19.1	0.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	8,672	2.7	8	1.5	0.1
Hispanic	125,653	39.0	339	63.4	0.3
Native American	971	0.3	1	0.2	0.1
White	139,829	43.5	85	15.9	0.1
Economically disadvantaged	146,655	45.6	291	54.4	0.2
State	321,799	100	535	100	0.2
Grade 8					
African American	45,669	14.4	164	16.0	0.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	8,274	2.6	16	1.6	0.2
Hispanic	122,538	38.7	633	61.8	0.5
Native American	935	0.3	9	0.9	1.0
White	139,473	44.0	203	19.8	0.1
Economically disadvantaged	136,320	43.0	514	50.1	0.4
State	316,889	100	1,025	100	0.3
Grade 9					
African American	57,892	15.1	958	19.3	1.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	9,400	2.5	52	1.0	0.6
Hispanic	157,326	41.0	3,009	60.7	1.9
Native American	1,113	0.3	12	0.2	1.1
White	157,925	41.2	926	18.7	0.6
Economically disadvantaged	149,513	39.0	1,973	39.8	1.3
State	383,656	100	4,957	100	1.3
Grade 10					
African American	42,706	14.1	725	19.8	1.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	8,745	2.9	39	1.1	0.4
Hispanic	108,610	36.0	1,978	53.9	1.8
Native American	817	0.3	10	0.3	1.2
White	141,210	46.7	916	25.0	0.6
Economically disadvantaged	100,978	33.4	1,406	38.3	1.4
State	302,088	100	3,668	100	1.2

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

continues

Table H-3
Students, Dropouts, and Annual Dropout Rate, by Student Group and Grade, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01 (continued)

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
Grade 11					
African American	33,967	13.4	647	18.4	1.9
Asian/Pacific Islander	8,208	3.2	58	1.6	0.7
Hispanic	84,919	33.5	1,763	50.0	2.1
Native American	674	0.3	8	0.2	1.2
White	125,801	49.6	1,049	29.8	0.8
Economically disadvantaged	75,133	29.6	1,156	32.8	1.5
State	253,569	100	3,525	100	1.4
Grade 12					
African American	32,757	13.6	692	18.0	2.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	7,826	3.2	82	2.1	1.0
Hispanic	80,366	33.4	1,767	45.9	2.2
Native American	664	0.3	9	0.2	1.4
White	119,326	49.5	1,303	33.8	1.1
Economically disadvantaged	65,222	27.1	1,194	31.0	1.8
State	240,939	100	3,853	100	1.6

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Table H-4
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Age, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

	Students		Dropouts		Annual
September 1 age	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
10	65	<0.1	1	<0.1	1.5
11	6,438	0.4	24	0.1	0.4
12	259,060	14.4	227	1.0	0.1
13	304,918	17.0	524	2.2	0.2
14	309,232	17.2	893	3.8	0.3
15	307,596	17.1	1,809	7.7	0.6
16	291,526	16.2	3,437	14.7	1.2
17	254,241	14.2	5,424	23.1	2.1
18	65,717	3.7	3,522	15.0	5.4
19	14,305	0.8	1,249	5.3	8.7
20	4,471	0.2	411	1.8	9.2
21	1,160	0.1	25	0.1	2.2

Table H-5
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Program Participation, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
Bilingual or English as a second language	91,217	5.0	1,340	7.6	1.5
Career and Technology (C/T)[a]	318,416	17.5	2,635	15.0	0.8
Gifted and talented	189,371	10.4	163	0.9	0.1
Special education	245,152	13.5	2,942	16.8	1.2
Title I	529,337	29.1	3,864	22.0	0.7

[a]Students participating in a C/T program, excluding those enrolled in a C/T course only.

Table H-6
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Characteristic, Texas Public Schools, 2000-01

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
At risk	658,785	36.2	7,618	43.4	1.2
Immigrant	30,923	1.7	432	2.5	1.4
Limited English proficient	111,631	6.1	1,587	9.0	1.4
Migrant	27,650	1.5	333	1.9	1.2
Overage	492,268	27.1	13,966	79.5	2.8

Table H-7
Students, Dropouts, and Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 1987-88 Through 2000-01

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
African American					
1987-88	194,373	14.3	16,364	17.9	8.4
1988-89	193,299	14.2	14,525	17.6	7.5
1989-90	192,802	14.2	13,012	18.6	6.7
1990-91	192,504	14.0	9,318	17.3	4.8
1991-92	196,915	14.0	9,370	17.5	4.8
1992-93	216,741	14.1	7,840	18.1	3.6
1993-94	221,013	14.0	7,090	17.6	3.2
1994-95	227,684	14.1	5,130	17.1	2.3
1995-96	234,175	14.1	5,397	18.5	2.3
1996-97	240,142	14.1	4,737	17.6	2.0
1997-98	244,987	14.1	5,152	18.7	2.1
1998-99	248,748	14.0	5,682	20.6	2.3
1999-00	253,986	14.2	4,675	19.9	1.8
2000-01	259,665	14.3	3,488	18.7	1.3
Asian/Pacific Islander					
1987-88	n/a[a]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1988-89	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1989-90	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1990-91	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1991-92	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1992-93	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1993-94	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1994-95	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1995-96	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996-97	43,314	2.5	330	1.2	0.8
1997-98	45,169	2.6	420	1.5	0.9
1998-99	47,762	2.7	424	1.5	0.9
1999-00	49,086	2.7	325	1.4	0.7
2000-01	51,125	2.8	255	1.5	0.5

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

[a]Not available. [b]Ethnicity other than African American, Hispanic, or White. Dropout rates for Asian/Pacific Islander and Native American student groups have been reported since 1996-97.

continues

Table H-7
Students, Dropouts, and Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 1987-88 Through 2000-01 (continued)

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
Hispanic					
1987-88	396,411	29.1	34,911	38.2	8.8
1988-89	412,904	30.4	33,456	40.6	8.1
1989-90	427,032	31.4	30,857	44.1	7.2
1990-91	444,246	32.4	24,728	45.8	5.6
1991-92	462,587	32.9	25,320	47.4	5.5
1992-93	516,212	33.7	21,512	49.6	4.2
1993-94	537,594	34.1	20,851	51.9	3.9
1994-95	556,684	34.4	14,928	49.9	2.7
1995-96	580,041	34.9	14,649	50.2	2.5
1996-97	603,067	35.4	13,859	51.5	2.3
1997-98	619,855	35.6	14,127	51.3	2.3
1998-99	638,041	36.0	14,413	52.2	2.3
1999-00	658,869	36.7	12,540	53.5	1.9
2000-01	679,412	37.4	9,489	54.0	1.4
Native American					
1987-88	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1988-89	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1989-90	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1990-91	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1991-92	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1992-93	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1993-94	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1994-95	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1995-96	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996-97	4,274	0.3	81	0.3	1.9
1997-98	4,468	0.3	117	0.4	2.6
1998-99	5,292	0.3	67	0.2	1.3
1999-00	4,923	0.3	65	0.3	1.3
2000-01	5,174	0.3	49	0.3	0.9

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

[a]Not available. [b]Ethnicity other than African American, Hispanic, or White. Dropout rates for Asian/Pacific Islander and Native American student groups have been reported since 1996-97.

continues

Table H-7
Students, Dropouts, and Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 1987-88 Through 2000-01 (continued)

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
White					
1987-88	744,254	54.6	38,305	42.0	5.1
1988-89	724,622	53.3	32,921	40.0	4.5
1989-90	711,264	52.2	24,854	35.5	3.5
1990-91	703,813	51.3	18,922	35.1	2.7
1991-92	712,858	50.7	17,745	33.2	2.5
1992-93	760,143	49.6	13,236	30.5	1.7
1993-94	775,361	49.2	11,558	28.7	1.5
1994-95	789,481	48.8	9,367	31.3	1.2
1995-96	802,509	48.3	8,639	29.6	1.1
1996-97	815,175	47.8	7,894	29.3	1.0
1997-98	828,660	47.5	7,734	28.1	0.9
1998-99	833,274	47.0	7,006	25.4	0.8
1999-00	827,657	46.1	5,852	24.9	0.7
2000-01	823,564	45.3	4,482	25.5	0.5
Other ethnicity[b]					
1987-88	28,160	2.1	1,727	1.9	6.1
1988-89	29,290	2.2	1,423	1.7	4.9
1989-90	30,396	2.2	1,317	1.9	4.3
1990-91	32,075	2.3	997	1.8	3.1
1991-92	34,478	2.5	985	1.8	2.9
1992-93	40,101	2.6	814	1.9	2.0
1993-94	42,047	2.7	712	1.8	1.7
1994-95	43,673	2.7	493	1.6	1.1
1995-96	45,853	2.8	522	1.8	1.1
1996-97	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1997-98	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998-99	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999-00	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2000-01	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

[a]Not available. [b]Ethnicity other than African American, Hispanic, or White. Dropout rates for Asian/Pacific Islander and Native American student groups have been reported since 1996-97.

continues

Table H-7
Students, Dropouts, and Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 1987-88 Through 2000-01 (continued)

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
Economically disadvantaged					
1987-88	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1988-89	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1989-90	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1990-91	399,025	29.1	14,755	27.3	3.7
1991-92	442,139	31.4	15,614	29.2	3.5
1992-93	463,452	30.2	13,515	31.1	2.9
1993-94	502,494	31.9	13,537	33.7	2.7
1994-95	535,480	33.1	10,176	34.0	1.9
1995-96	555,318	33.4	9,608	32.9	1.7
1996-97	595,036	34.9	9,393	34.9	1.6
1997-98	626,080	35.9	9,911	36.0	1.6
1998-99	616,720	34.8	9,391	34.0	1.5
1999-00	646,760	36.0	8,303	35.4	1.3
2000-01	673,821	37.0	6,534	37.2	1.0
Female					
1987-88	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1988-89	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1989-90	661,639	48.6	31,791	45.4	4.8
1990-91	669,929	48.8	24,480	45.4	3.7
1991-92	685,901	48.8	24,379	45.6	3.6
1992-93	744,251	48.5	20,221	46.6	2.7
1993-94	764,859	48.5	18,730	46.6	2.4
1994-95	785,553	48.6	13,572	45.4	1.7
1995-96	807,010	48.5	13,299	45.5	1.6
1996-97	827,658	48.5	12,283	45.7	1.5
1997-98	845,916	48.5	12,820	46.5	1.5
1998-99	860,094	48.5	12,545	45.5	1.5
1999-00	870,977	48.5	10,377	44.2	1.2
2000-01	883,036	48.5	7,829	44.6	0.9

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

[a]Not available. [b]Ethnicity other than African American, Hispanic, or White. Dropout rates for Asian/Pacific Islander and Native American student groups have been reported since 1996-97.

continues

Table H-7
Students, Dropouts, and Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 7-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 1987-88 Through 2000-01 (continued)

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
Male					
1987-88	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1988-89	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1989-90	699,855	51.4	38,249	54.6	5.5
1990-91	702,809	51.2	29,485	54.6	4.2
1991-92	720,937	51.2	29,041	54.4	4.0
1992-93	788,946	51.5	23,181	53.4	2.9
1993-94	811,156	51.5	21,481	53.4	2.6
1994-95	831,969	51.4	16,346	54.6	2.0
1995-96	855,568	51.5	15,908	54.5	1.9
1996-97	878,314	51.5	14,618	54.3	1.7
1997-98	897,223	51.5	14,730	53.5	1.6
1998-99	913,023	51.5	15,047	54.5	1.6
1999-00	923,544	51.5	13,080	55.8	1.4
2000-01	935,904	51.5	9,734	55.4	1.0
State					
1987-88	1,363,198	100	91,307	100	6.7
1988-89	1,360,115	100	82,325	100	6.1
1989-90	1,361,494	100	70,040	100	5.1
1990-91	1,372,738	100	53,965	100	3.9
1991-92	1,406,838	100	53,420	100	3.8
1992-93	1,533,197	100	43,402	100	2.8
1993-94	1,576,015	100	40,211	100	2.6
1994-95	1,617,522	100	29,918	100	1.8
1995-96	1,662,578	100	29,207	100	1.8
1996-97	1,705,972	100	26,901	100	1.6
1997-98	1,743,139	100	27,550	100	1.6
1998-99	1,773,117	100	27,592	100	1.6
1999-00	1,794,521	100	23,457	100	1.3
2000-01	1,818,940	100	17,563	100	1.0

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

[a]Not available. [b]Ethnicity other than African American, Hispanic, or White. Dropout rates for Asian/Pacific Islander and Native American student groups have been reported since 1996-97.

Table H-8
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 9-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 1997-98 Through 2000-01

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
African American					
1997-98	158,745	14.1	4,616	18.9	2.9
1998-99	160,460	14.0	5,225	21.0	3.3
1999-00	163,910	14.1	4,341	20.2	2.6
2000-01	167,322	14.2	3,022	18.9	1.8
Asian/Pacific Islander					
1997-98	30,157	2.7	367	1.5	1.2
1998-99	32,359	2.8	376	1.5	1.2
1999-00	33,184	2.9	298	1.4	0.9
2000-01	34,179	2.9	231	1.4	0.7
Hispanic					
1997-98	394,619	35.1	12,368	50.7	3.1
1998-99	406,533	35.5	12,793	51.4	3.1
1999-00	419,161	36.0	11,320	52.8	2.7
2000-01	431,221	36.5	8,517	53.2	2.0
Native American					
1997-98	2,840	0.3	99	0.4	3.5
1998-99	3,508	0.3	60	0.2	1.7
1999-00	3,079	0.3	55	0.3	1.8
2000-01	3,268	0.3	39	0.2	1.2
White					
1997-98	538,630	47.9	6,964	28.5	1.3
1998-99	543,050	47.4	6,432	25.8	1.2
1999-00	544,549	46.8	5,425	25.3	1.0
2000-01	544,262	46.1	4,194	26.2	0.8
Economically disadvantaged					
1997-98	357,724	31.8	8,313	34.1	2.3
1998-99	353,724	30.9	8,086	32.5	2.3
1999-00	372,577	32.0	7,263	33.9	1.9
2000-01	390,846	33.1	5,729	35.8	1.5
Female					
1997-98	546,238	48.6	11,175	45.8	2.0
1998-99	555,830	48.5	11,150	44.8	2.0
1999-00	565,268	48.6	9,325	43.5	1.6
2000-01	574,028	48.6	7,012	43.8	1.2
Male					
1997-98	578,753	51.4	13,239	54.2	2.3
1998-99	590,080	51.5	13,736	55.2	2.3
1999-00	598,615	51.4	12,114	56.5	2.0
2000-01	606,224	51.4	8,991	56.2	1.5

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

continues

Table H-8
Annual Dropout Rate, Grades 9-12, by Student Group, Texas Public Schools, 1997-98 Through 2000-01 (continued)

Group	Students		Dropouts		Annual
State	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	dropout rate (%)
1997-98	1,124,991	100	24,414	100	2.2
1998-99	1,145,910	100	24,886	100	2.2
1999-00	1,163,883	100	21,439	100	1.8
2000-01	1,180,252	100	16,003	100	1.4

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Table H-9
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates, Grades 9-12, by Student Characteristic/Program Participation, Texas Public Schools, Class of 2001

Group	Number in cohort	Graduated		Received GED[a]		Continued		Dropped out	
		Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
At-Risk	112,076	79,482	70.9	7,119	6.4	15,407	13.7	10,068	9.0
Career and Technology	99,662	87,452	87.7	3,151	3.2	5,914	5.9	3,145	3.2
Gifted/talented	28,375	27,748	97.8	274	1.0	177	0.6	176	0.6
Limited English proficient	8,480	4,531	53.4	140	1.7	1,910	22.5	1,899	22.4
Special education	27,550	19,524	70.9	899	3.3	4,443	16.1	2,684	9.7

Note. Parts may not add to 100 percent because of rounding. Student characteristics and program participation were assigned based on the year of a student's final status in the cohort.

[a]General Educational Development certificate.

Table H-10
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates, Grades 9-12, Texas Public Schools, Classes 1996 Through 2001

Group	Number in cohort	Graduated		Received GED[a]		Continued		Dropped out	
		Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
African American									
Class of 1996	27,200	18,849	69.3	1,443	5.3	2,738	10.1	4,170	15.3
Class of 1997	28,913	20,787	71.9	1,471	5.1	2,873	9.9	3,782	13.1
Class of 1998	30,464	22,597	74.2	989	3.2	3,356	11.0	3,522	11.6
Class of 1999	31,436	23,475	74.7	988	3.1	3,331	10.6	3,642	11.6
Class of 2000	32,338	24,863	76.9	1,132	3.5	3,133	9.7	3,210	9.9
Class of 2001	33,586	26,094	77.7	1,096	3.3	3,561	10.6	2,835	8.4
Asian/Pacific Islander									
Class of 1996	5,836	5,014	85.9	139	2.4	294	5.0	389	6.7
Class of 1997	6,009	5,262	87.6	142	2.4	330	5.5	275	4.6
Class of 1998	6,526	5,598	85.8	121	1.9	539	8.3	268	4.1
Class of 1999	6,992	6,110	87.4	153	2.2	437	6.3	292	4.2
Class of 2000	7,207	6,398	88.8	165	2.3	393	5.5	251	3.5
Class of 2001	7,665	6,901	90.0	150	2.0	379	4.9	235	3.1
Hispanic									
Class of 1996	68,532	43,926	64.1	4,165	6.1	8,242	12.0	12,199	17.8
Class of 1997	70,793	47,623	67.3	3,987	5.6	8,373	11.8	10,810	15.3
Class of 1998	74,507	52,014	69.8	2,926	3.9	9,557	12.8	10,010	13.4
Class of 1999	79,538	56,126	70.6	2,789	3.5	10,187	12.8	10,436	13.1
Class of 2000	83,360	60,683	72.8	3,507	4.2	9,846	11.8	9,324	11.2
Class of 2001	85,391	62,732	73.5	3,657	4.3	10,797	12.6	8,205	9.6
Native American									
Class of 1996	506	360	71.1	41	8.1	36	7.1	69	13.6
Class of 1997	500	374	74.8	35	7.0	42	8.4	49	9.8
Class of 1998	755	432	57.2	30	4.0	222	29.4	71	9.4
Class of 1999	724	589	81.4	38	5.2	49	6.8	48	6.6
Class of 2000	605	477	78.8	38	6.3	42	6.9	48	7.9
Class of 2001	681	520	76.4	51	7.5	53	7.8	57	8.4
White									
Class of 1996	108,807	90,275	83.0	7,093	6.5	4,020	3.7	7,419	6.8
Class of 1997	112,078	94,258	84.1	7,128	6.4	4,030	3.6	6,662	5.9
Class of 1998	115,797	98,738	85.3	5,633	4.9	5,071	4.4	6,355	5.5
Class of 1999	119,590	103,141	86.2	5,556	4.6	5,080	4.2	5,813	4.9
Class of 2000	121,267	105,158	86.7	6,806	5.6	4,407	3.6	4,896	4.0
Class of 2001	121,838	105,805	86.8	7,024	5.8	4,790	3.9	4,219	3.5

[a]General Educational Development certificate. [b]Numbers in cohort for ethnicity will not sum to the state total because some student records lacked information on ethnicity.

continues

Table H-10
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates, Grades 9-12, Texas Public Schools, Classes 1996 Through 2001 (continued)

Group	Number in cohort	Graduated		Received GED[a]		Continued		Dropped out	
		Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Economically disadvantaged									
Class of 1996	55,302	35,463	64.1	3,351	6.1	5,978	10.8	10,510	19.0
Class of 1997	58,481	39,801	68.1	3,459	5.9	6,219	10.6	9,002	15.4
Class of 1998	63,372	44,723	70.6	2,491	3.9	7,441	11.7	8,717	13.8
Class of 1999	67,639	48,204	71.3	2,562	3.8	7,991	11.8	8,882	13.1
Class of 2000	71,486	51,896	72.6	3,345	4.7	7,988	11.2	8,257	11.6
Class of 2001	74,246	54,352	73.2	3,450	4.6	9,125	12.3	7,319	9.9
State[b]									
Class of 1996	212,523	158,426	74.5	13,059	6.1	15,330	7.2	25,708	12.1
Class of 1997	218,293	168,304	77.1	12,763	5.8	15,648	7.2	21,578	9.9
Class of 1998	228,049	179,379	78.7	9,699	4.3	18,745	8.2	20,226	8.9
Class of 1999	238,280	189,441	79.5	9,524	4.0	19,084	8.0	20,231	8.5
Class of 2000	244,777	197,579	80.7	11,648	4.8	17,821	7.3	17,729	7.2
Class of 2001	249,161	202,052	81.1	11,978	4.8	19,580	7.9	15,551	6.2

[a]General Educational Development certificate. [b]Numbers in cohort for ethnicity will not sum to the state total because some student records lacked information on ethnicity.

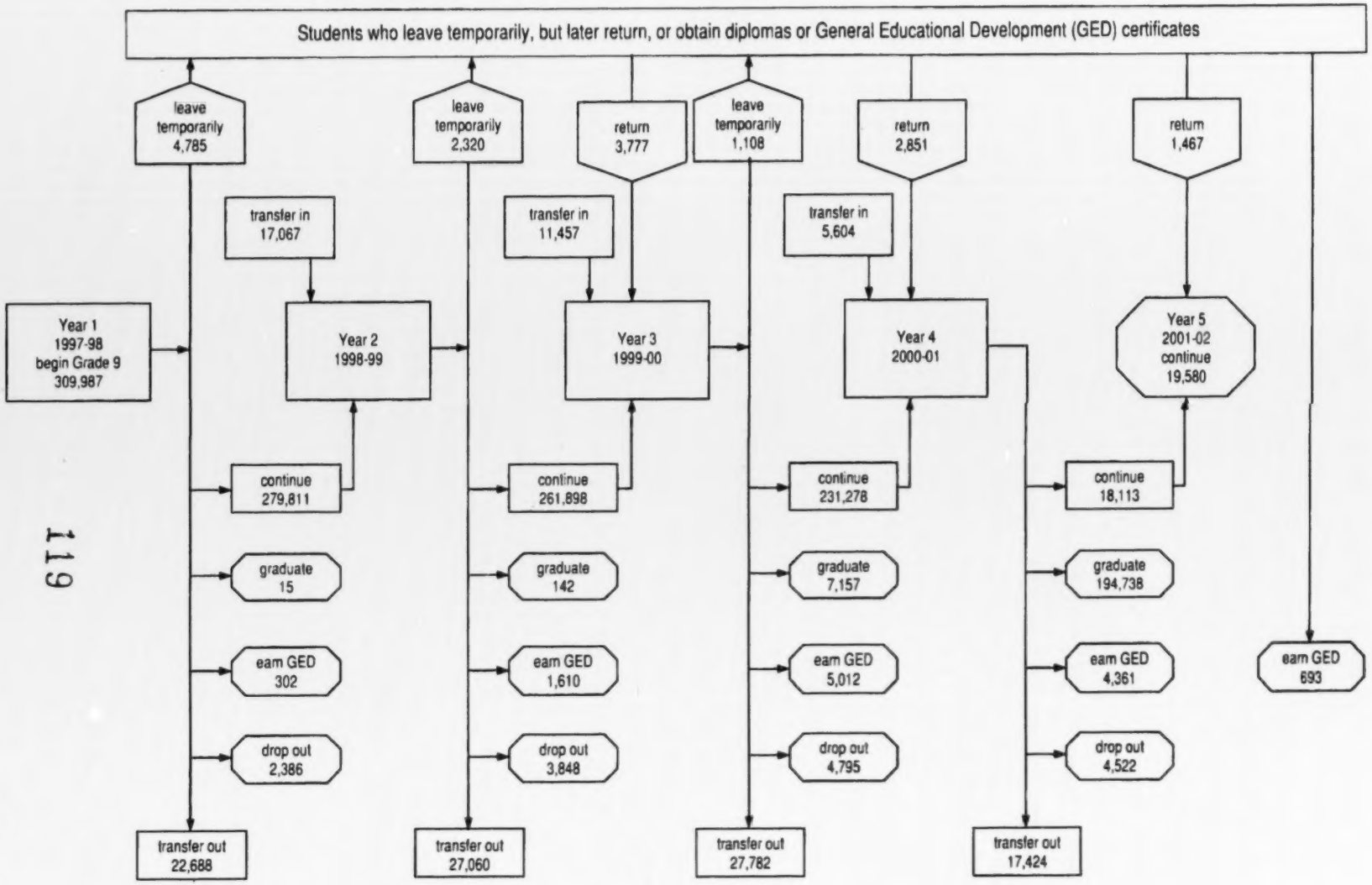
Table H-11
Longitudinal Completion/Student Status Rates, Grades 7-12, Texas Public Schools, Classes 1998 Through 2001

Group	Number in cohort	Graduated		Received GED[a]		Continued		Dropped out	
		Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
African American									
Class of 1998	31,047	22,255	71.7	996	3.2	3,990	12.9	3,806	12.3
Class of 1999	31,651	23,178	73.2	966	3.1	3,812	12.0	3,695	11.7
Class of 2000	32,536	24,504	75.3	1,088	3.3	3,589	11.0	3,355	10.3
Class of 2001	33,941	25,814	76.1	1,055	3.1	3,989	11.8	3,083	9.1
Asian/Pacific Islander									
Class of 1998	6,599	5,598	84.8	120	1.8	585	8.9	296	4.5
Class of 1999	7,027	6,105	86.9	151	2.1	448	6.4	323	4.6
Class of 2000	7,248	6,376	88.0	173	2.4	414	5.7	285	3.9
Class of 2001	7,680	6,868	89.4	143	1.9	402	5.2	267	3.5
Hispanic									
Class of 1998	76,792	51,622	67.2	2,892	3.8	10,756	14.0	11,522	15.0
Class of 1999	81,425	55,632	68.3	2,788	3.4	11,371	14.0	11,634	14.3
Class of 2000	84,058	59,793	71.1	3,368	4.0	10,722	12.8	10,175	12.1
Class of 2001	86,739	62,189	71.7	3,594	4.1	11,803	13.6	9,153	10.6
Native American									
Class of 1998	765	427	55.8	29	3.8	238	31.1	71	9.3
Class of 1999	733	581	79.3	32	4.4	59	8.0	61	8.3
Class of 2000	617	470	76.2	39	6.3	48	7.8	60	9.7
Class of 2001	692	522	75.4	52	7.5	63	9.1	55	7.9
White									
Class of 1998	116,579	98,155	84.2	5,581	4.8	5,989	5.1	6,854	5.9
Class of 1999	120,029	102,589	85.5	5,521	4.6	5,853	4.9	6,066	5.1
Class of 2000	121,460	104,447	86.0	6,777	5.6	5,107	4.2	5,129	4.2
Class of 2001	122,356	105,323	86.1	6,964	5.7	5,540	4.5	4,529	3.7
Economically disadvantaged									
Class of 1998	66,078	44,319	67.1	2,578	3.9	8,613	13.0	10,568	16.0
Class of 1999	69,848	47,745	68.4	2,648	3.8	9,120	13.1	10,335	14.8
Class of 2000	72,768	51,078	70.2	3,363	4.6	8,889	12.2	9,438	13.0
Class of 2001	76,000	53,860	70.9	3,514	4.6	10,119	13.3	8,507	11.2
State[b]									
Class of 1998	231,976	178,057	76.8	9,623	4.1	21,558	9.3	22,738	9.8
Class of 1999	240,865	188,085	78.1	9,458	3.9	21,543	8.9	21,779	9.0
Class of 2000	245,919	195,590	79.5	11,445	4.7	19,880	8.1	19,004	7.7
Class of 2001	251,408	200,716	79.8	11,808	4.7	21,797	8.7	17,087	6.8

[a]General Educational Development certificate. [b]Numbers in cohort for ethnicity will not sum to the state total because some student records lacked information on ethnicity.

Appendix I
Synopsis of Student Progress Through High School, Class of 2001

Figure I-1.
Synopsis of Student Progress Through High School, Class of 2001



Note. ⬭ indicates final student statuses.

Appendix J
Comparing Annual and Longitudinal Dropout Counts at the State Level

Figure J-1
Comparing Annual and Longitudinal Dropout Counts at the State Level (continues)

This chart demonstrates how annual counts of official dropouts are related to the number of dropouts in the longitudinal rate at the state level. See the facing page for a detailed explanation of each element in the chart.

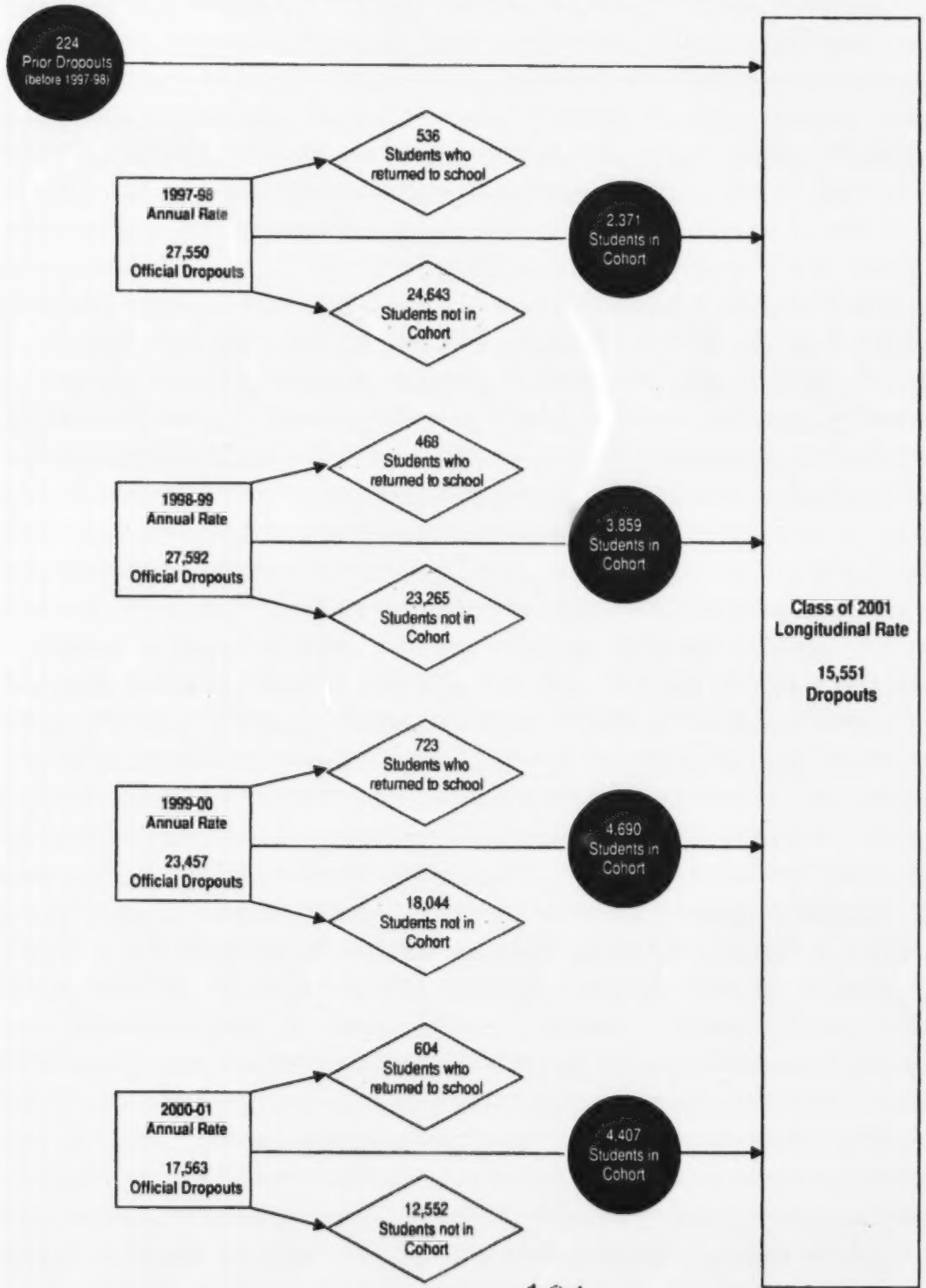


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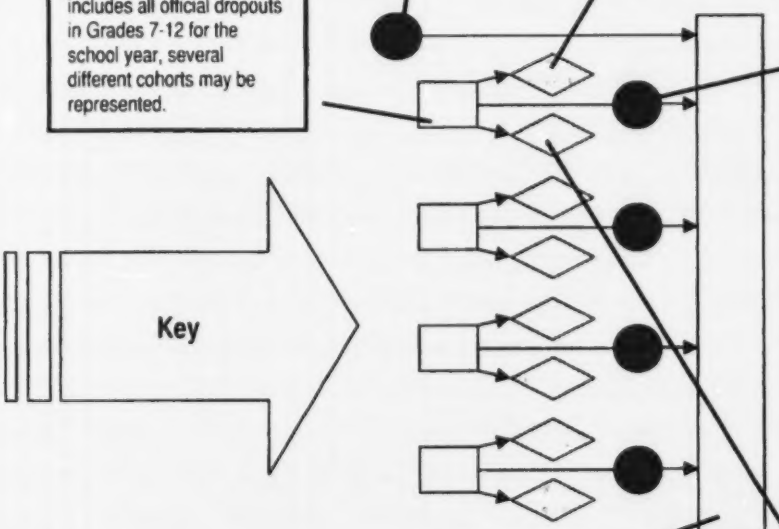
Figure J-1
Comparing Annual and Longitudinal Dropout Counts at the State Level (continued)

2. Prior dropouts
Prior dropouts are students who first drop out in Grades 7 or 8, return to school, begin Grade 9 with the cohort, drop out in the next four years and have the final statuses of dropout. They appear as official dropouts in the annual rate only in the first year they drop out. They are counted as dropouts in the longitudinal dropout rate if they drop out during the four years and do not return.

1. Official dropouts in the annual rate
These are students counted as official dropouts in the annual dropout rate for the state. In this example, we are interested in dropouts who will be counted in the class of 2001 longitudinal dropout rate. Because the dropout count for the annual dropout rate includes all official dropouts in Grades 7-12 for the school year, several different cohorts may be represented.

3. Students removed from the longitudinal dropout count
Students who drop out, but later earn a diploma or General Educational Development (GED) certificate, or reenroll in school, are not counted as dropouts. Rather, they are counted based on their final statuses. Also, dropouts with problematic identification information cannot be tracked from year to year, and must be removed from the cohort.



4. Students in the cohort
Cohort membership is determined by the year students first attend Grade 9. In this example, students who first attend Grade 9 in 1997-98 are members of the cohort. Students who transfer in on grade – for example, Grade 10 transfers in the 1998-99 school year, are added to the cohort. Only dropouts who are cohort members are included in the class of 2001 longitudinal dropout count.

5. Students not in cohort
These are students who drop out and are counted as dropouts in the annual dropout rate, but are not members of the cohort of interest –in this case, the cohort of 1997-98 Grade 9 students. Dropouts who are members of other cohorts are counted in the longitudinal dropout rates for other years.

6. Students in the longitudinal dropout rate
This is the total of all students in the cohort whose final statuses are dropout.

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2. operation of school bus routes or runs on a nonsegregated basis;
3. nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;
4. nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;
5. enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;
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Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is found, the findings are reported to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

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Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as Amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972; Executive Orders 11246 and 11375; Equal Pay Act of 1964; Title IX, Education Amendments; Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as Amended; 1974 Amendments to the Wage-Hour Law Expanding the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1972 as Amended; Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986; Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990; and the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

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